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SELECTED ESSAYS
on Literary Subjects

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TO

CONSTANCE

LADY BATTERSEA

THESE ESSAYS ARE INSCRIBED

BY THE AUTHOR

Blest if, in one bright intellect like thine,
He wins regard and builds himself a shrine.

J. H. WIFFEN.

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THE GENIUS OF DICKENS

SELECTED ESSAYS

THE GENIUS OF DICKENS[1]

I HAVE heard, on what seems credible authority, that an eminent scholar, who, at the present moment, occupies the Chair of English Literature at one of our Universities, began a lecture on the same subject as that on which I have the honour of addressing you to-night with these memorable words: "Strictly speaking, Charles Dickens had no humour." I cannot promise you any observations of so startling and arresting a kind as that; I shall confine myself to a much humbler, more ordinary, and more natural effort. You must pardon the egotism of a lively gratitude if the word "I" occurs oftener in the course of my speech than I could wish, for I can truly say that Charles Dickens has been to me, though I never knew him, nor even saw him, one of the very best friends that life has afforded, and best in the darkest hours. In that respect, I can only bracket him with Sir Walter Scott, there being this difference between the two cases, that Scott was to all of us an historical character, whereas some of us lived contemporaneously with part of Charles Dickens' life. He was a marked,

[1] A Paper read before the "Boz" Club, February 7, 1913.

a conspicuous, a familiar figure in English life, even to those who never set eyes upon him; and I do not forget, and never can forget, a bright morning in the month of June, 1870, when I was a boy at Harrow, and Albert Grey, now Lord Grey, having somehow or other got the London paper before the rest of us had seen it, shouted out to me, "Charles Dickens is dead." It is a terribly hackneyed phrase to say it came upon me like the loss of a personal friend, but that is the exact statement of the fact; and it is a sensation which I have never since experienced on the death of any eminent person in literature or art, save and except, perhaps, in the one case of Matthew Arnold; but then with him I actually had the advantage of a long and intimate friendship. In the case of the great subject of to-night's solemnity, as I said just now, it was merely that he was a figure to one's mental sense, and, through his books, had become one of one's most intimate friends.

I am not going to speak of Dickens as Social Reformer, or Politician, or Philanthropist. I do not even stop to enquire the extent to which his books were inspired by a definite purpose. For, to say the truth, I doubt if purpose had much to do with them. His genius dominated him. Lord Lytton, of the second generation, has this striking couplet:

> "Talk not of Genius baffled. Genius is master of man;
> Genius does what it must, and Talent does what it can."

It is of Dickens' genius that I speak. That genius was many-sided. He was great in fiction, great—I say it advisedly—in drama; great in horror and

tragedy; but he was the greatest humourist that ever lived; and, as we his disciples believe, his glorious mirth will live for ever in the hearts of men. Talent slowly developes and improves itself, but Genius, to quote a famous phrase, " rises full-orbed above the horizon." Note Dickens' precocity. He was born in 1812; he published *Sketches by Boz* in 1835, and the first paper in the book was written in 1833, when the writer was just twenty-one. It is, of course, a book comparatively little accounted of, though Dickens himself thought it worth while to republish it in 1850. But in it the genius stands unmistakably revealed in two directions—the sombre and the playful. For the playful, take the description of the proceedings in the Ecclesiastical Court, where the tipsy ginger-beer-seller was found guilty of brawling in church, and was sentenced to excommunication for a fortnight, with payment of costs; and thereupon said it would be much more convenient if the judge " would take off the costs, and excommunicate him for the term of his natural life, for he never went to church at all." For a sample of sombre power, look in the same book at the short and awful story called " The Black Veil." Horror, indeed! but not mere horror—horror touched with pathos and pity. And here we see the double track along which Dickens so soon moved to glory.

In 1836, he was twenty-four years old, and gave the world an unique book; alone of all his works, it is —if we except the intercalated tales—humorous from first to last. To recount all the jokes in *Pickwick* would be a long job. No one, even in a book-

making age, has yet ventured to publish a slim volume called *The Wit and Humour of Charles Dickens.* There is no need to elaborate the characters. Of Mr. Pickwick himself I may remark in passing that Matthew Arnold, in one of the neglected masterpieces of the English language, a book called *Friendship's Garland*, pictured himself, in his assumed character, taking down his Prussian friend, Arminius, to the House of Commons, to hear Sir William Harcourt " develope a system of unsectarian religion from the life of Mr. Pickwick." I have always thought that a noble conception, and one which the genuine benevolence of that great man, untrammelled, as far as I know, by ecclesiastical dogma, admirably illustrates.

I go on to *Nicholas Nickleby*, not as the next book in order only, but as my own special favourite of the whole great library, When I say this, I am in good company: for in 1838 Sydney Smith wrote: "*Nickleby* is very good. I stood out against Mr. Dickens as long as I could, but he has conquered me." Here, to borrow a figure from a beverage of which Charles Dickens knew the taste, the lemon is freely introduced into the punch—no longer pure fun, but fun touched with indignant pathos. Miss Squeers, Miss La Creevy, Mrs. Kenwigs, Mr. Mantalini—the whole house and company of Vincent Crummles—I love them all, even as Miss Snevellicci's papa loved all the ladies. More particularly do I love Mrs. Nickleby, that true type of the Eternal Feminine—" 'I say again,' said Mrs. Nickleby, who, it is needless to observe, had never said so before"; and I hold in

due reverence that prince of all Shakespearean critics Mr. Curdle, who " had written a pamphlet of sixty-four pages, post octavo, on the character of the nurse's deceased husband in *Romeo and Juliet*, with an enquiry whether he had really been a ' merry man ' in his lifetime, or whether it was merely his widow's affectionate partiality that induced her so to report him."

Of *Martin Chuzzlewit*, one must admit that it is not a good novel; but, against that, it is only fair to remember that it gives us those two Weird Sisters of the Sick Room, whose names need not be mentioned in a company of Dickensians; the sublime Mr. Pecksniff; and the whole gallery of American portraits.

David Copperfield has the charm of an Autobiography; and there must be many a man—even the man to whom Dickens' humour does not appeal—who feels that there is a touch of terrible resemblance to life in the character of Steerforth, and the influence which he exercised over his boy-friend. There must be many a man who looks back to his schooldays, and remembers a character very much like Steerforth, who dominated him by his superior strength, beauty, and accomplishments, and yet left a final impression for harm upon his life.

In *The Old Curiosity Shop*, we encounter such beloved and familiar figures as Miss Brass, the Marchioness, and our dear Dick Swiveller, whose parodies of Moore, and other popular songsters, ought really to be included in the anthologies of English poetry.

Bleak House has, I think, a virtue of its own. I

saw the other day—only two or three days ago—that some literary gentleman, writing in a literary paper, seemed to take credit to himself for the fact that he had never yet been able to read *Bleak House*, although, as he rather irrelevantly observed, he lived close to Rochester. In my judgment, this book is, with the possible exception of *Great Expectations*, the best novel that Dickens ever wrote. The delays of the Court of Chancery must be forgiven, in consideration of the fact that they gave us Conversation Kenge and Mr. Vholes, and Miss Flite; and misused philanthropy is responsible for Mrs. Jellyby and Mrs. Pardiggle, whose message to their age is not yet exhausted. But the plot of the story—Lady Dedlock's secret, and her accidental betrayal of it by an unguarded exclamation—seems to me to show the story-teller's supreme and essential gift—the power of making the reader long to know the issue of the mystery.

A very special word is needed about *A Tale of Two Cities*. If, in reply to the question, "Are you fond of Dickens?" the person questioned says, "I like *A Tale of Two Cities*," you may put him or her down for lost. They have neither part nor lot in this matter. They are, indeed, no true Dickensians, for the one book they like is not really Dickens—at least, not the Dickens whom in the other books we know and love. Yet, quite as conspicuously as *Pickwick*, *A Tale of Two Cities* is a work of genius. The novelist in it becomes for the nonce a dramatist. We may pretermit, as the Scotch says, Miss Pross, and Stryver, and the Crunchers, for our interest lies

in Paris. The story of Sydney Carton's self-sacrifice is a pure and perfect tragedy; and to read the scene at the guillotine makes one feel as if one had been there.

Though Dickens' keenest joy and most perfect achievements were in the realm of humour, he could, when he chose, make our hearts stand still with horror; and the very fact that he was so completely master of the horrific mood makes his self-restraint in using it the more remarkable. Take, as examples of what I mean, Merdle's suicide at the Baths, the death of Madame Defarge, Montague's evening walk towards the wood, the description of the room in which Krook died, the death of Sikes, Haredale's struggle with his brother's murderer on the moon-lit tower, and Orlick's preparations for murdering Pip at the Limekiln. If you have forgotten them, read them through again, and admire the self-restraint which could write like this and yet wrote like this so seldom.

I spoke at the outset of Dickens' precocity. Not less remarkable is his fecundity. Some day, a Dickensian scholar, or syndicate of scholars, will set to work to count the total number of persons mentioned in Dickens' books, and they will find it a vast total, and no two alike. Each has his, or her, separate identity and distinct characteristics. To enumerate all the famous characters whose portraits were elaborated, and who have their permanent place in literature, would to-night be superfluity. But, in addition to these towering personalities, we must remember the goodly band of subsidiary characters, who yet have personalities and records of their own.

Even when dealing with different men of the same profession, Dickens never repeats himself. Sergeant Buzfuz is not in the least like Sergeant Snuffin, and the unnamed "Bar," in *Little Dorrit*, with his famous argument about the "limited right of lopping and felling in the woods of Blinkiter Doddles," is not the least like either. Perker, and Pell, and Brass, and Dodson, and Fogg were Attorneys, but have nothing else in common. Even Spenlow the Proctor, and Witherden the Notary, who might have been dangerously alike, are as different as chalk and cheese.

Then again, who, except Dickens, ever gave us a complete College of Physicians, each quite distinct from his compeers! Run them over in your minds: Dr. Parker Peps, the fashionable consultant; Sir Tumley Snuffim, who attended Mrs. Wititterly; Mr. Pilkins, the General Practitioner; Dr. Lumby, the accoucheur; Dr. Haggage, in the Marshalsea, with "the dirtiest white trousers conceivable by mortal man"; Mr. Jobling, the Medical Officer of the Anglo-Bengalee Disinterested Loan and Life Insurance Company; and the un-named physician, with "a great bunch of seals dangling below a waistcoat of ribbed black satin," who was called to the bed of Little Nell, recommended the remedies which he thought the landlady had already applied, and left every one in transports of "admiration of that wisdom which tallied so closely with their own."

Schoolmasters, again.—Mr. Squeers, with his ominous sentence, "I have had disappointments to contend against. Bolder's father was two pound ten short. Come here, Bolder." Who, that has ever

been a schoolboy, does not sympathise with Bolder? Mr. Creakle, sitting at breakfast with the newspaper and the cane, and the buttered toast—Mr. Creakle, of Salem House, which Matthew Arnold pronounced to be the most perfect picture of a Middle Class School in literature; Dr. Blimber, with his blue-coated butler and his ample rhetoric about the Ancient Romans—his pupils' "implacable enemies." Dr. Strong at Canterbury may be added, though it must be admitted that he was rather an old muff; and, in a series of educators, Mrs. Pipchin must not be forgotten, with her flowerpots full of cactuses, "which appeared to have boiled over," and who, when the children, played, rapped on the wall like an angry Cock Lane ghost.

To the characters thus strongly marked there must be added the vast company of evanescent figures which just flit across the stage and are lost for ever. Swinburne, a devout Dickensian, used to say that to be asked to give offhand the histories of Horatio Peltirogus and Jane Dibabs would be a sound test of Dickensian scholarship. Tell me all you know of Goodwin, Bapps, Pruffle, Tinkler, Bulph, Pip, Peak, Flopson, Tommy Screwzer, Miss Gwynn, and Mr. Topsawyer, and I will tell you what sort of Dickensian you are.

To the closer kind of student may be commended the question—how many different people called Martin are mentioned in *Pickwick?* Lovers of a bet may get some sport out of the colour of Mr. Magnus's spectacles and of Mrs. Micawber's gloves. I quoted Bulph just now. He was a pilot at Portsmouth,

and Sir William Richmond, also one of the greatest admirers of our great man, hails as a flawless vignette the description of Bulph's house, with " a boat-green door, and window frames of the same colour; a brass knocker, a brass plate, and a brass bell-handle, and the little finger of a drowned man on the parlour mantelshelf."

Are Dickens' characters lifelike? The question is tremendous, and I am glad that, in these later days. an adequate champion has arisen to thunder Yes, in the person of my honoured friend, Mr. Gilbert Chesterton. Yes, and a thousand times yes. They are so lifelike that one's only difficulty is to believe that one did not know them in the flesh. The admirable illustrations of the old editions no doubt did something to foster this illusion, but it goes deeper than that. The number of Dickensian phrases which have passed into everyday speech proves that his characters thought and spoke as human beings think and speak. Take them quite at random, half a dozen of those we know best. To say a thing " in a Pickwickian sense." " If there are two crowds, shout with the largest." " Put the bottle on the chimley-piece; and let me put my lips to it when I am so dispoged." " King Charles' head in the Memorial." " Codlin's the friend, not Short." " Prunes and prism." " The right shop for morals." " The demned total." " All taps is wanities." " Is 'owls was orgins." " A cold swarry." " A human boy." " Something turning up." " Making an effort." An " Infant Phenomenon," and " Borrioboola-Gha." Every one of these sayings or phrases—and one

might quote a hundred more—has passed into the current speech and current writing of Englishmen, and each recalls on the instant a definite personality or an actual event.

I spoke before of Mrs. Nickleby as his type of the Eternal Feminine. Her genuine amiability, her devotion to her family, her tenderness to the sick and the afflicted—all these are Feminine in the best and highest sense. What if she enumerated a vainglorious list of her unsuccessful lovers? What if she even encouraged, however faintly, the advances of the old gentleman in small clothes? It did not make her less a woman. But it was in the region of ratiocination that she most triumphantly vindicated her sex. Recall, if you have forgotten it, her immortal argument for the opulence of milliners, evolved for the encouragement of Kate when she became assistant to Madame Mantalini. "My dear, I recollect when your poor papa and I came to town after we were married, that a young lady brought me home a new bonnet, in her own carriage, which drove up to the door full gallop—at least, I am not quite certain whether it was her own carriage or a hackney chariot, but I remember very well that the horse dropped down dead as he was turning round, and your poor papa said he hadn't had any corn for a fortnight."

When fops and fogies essay the hopeless task of belittling Dickens, they always remark, with a patronising air, "Ah, I don't deny that Dickens could describe the Poor and the Middle Class, but he never could draw a Gentleman." To this absurdity

some one happily replied, " You forget Joe Gargery." I would add Sir Leicester Dedlock, whose conduct towards his wife shows him a gentlman in the strictest sense of the word, and whose very follies were gentlemanlike; and poor Lord Frederick Verisopht, whose true character has been obscured by his tomfool name, but who gave his life to champion the honour of a defenceless girl.[1]

Was Dickens a close observer? The question sounds absurd, but I have a reason for asking it. " A close observer," has come to mean a writer who, having undertaken a subject, diligently " mugs up," as boys say, all existing books on that subject, and can quote chapter and verse for the justification of every detail. Of these laborious and scientific novelists we have all too many. Sometimes they deal with politics, sometimes with social problems, sometimes with criticism and theology. At every point they are infallible, and generally they are bores. I take it that, except when he was handling a distinctly historical subject, this was not Dickens' method. I imagine that he relied on the lightning rapidity of his eye and ear, and his power, at once photographic and phonographic, of reproducing what he saw and heard. He delighted in broad effects, and cared little for purism or pedantry. For instance, I am told that the methods of cross-examination pursued in Bardell *v.* Pickwick are not those of our English Law Courts. Certainly, the great match between Dingley Dell and All-Muggleton

[1] A friend suggests—and I agree—that Lord Feenix ought to be added.

defied the rules of M.C.C.; and one's father's second wife is more correctly styled one's stepmother than one's mother-in-law.

Like all good men and great writers, Dickens had a friendly feeling towards food and drink. In drinks he was a connoisseur of the first class. Who but he ever analysed "Dogsnose"? *Pickwick* reeks of brandy-and-water. I once annotated my copy with the number of times that alcoholic drinks were mentioned, and a workman, who was employed in my house on some repairs, stole the volume, "perchance," as Tennyson so beautifully says,

> "Perchance as finding there unconsciously
> Some image of himself."

Dickens' dinners are not his best meals, though there was quite a nice one at the Patriarch's, and there would have been a nice one at the Jellybys' "if it had had any cooking at all"; and Guppy entertained young Smallweed and Jobling very handsomely at the "Slap-Bang." Dickens was better at supper; that was a capital stew at "The Jolly Sandboy." But the meal at which he excelled was High Tea. I protest I cannot read the account of Mrs. Snagsby's provision for entertaining Mr. Chadband without a watering mouth, even though it should be necessary to emulate Mrs. Gamp's caution on a similar occasion—"First cutting off the crust on account of tender teeth, and not too many of them."

What about Dickens' style? Had he a style? Could one say, if one did not know, "That passage is

certainly Dickens"? I doubt it; for the best of the parodists can make nothing of him. His writing varied extraordinarily from time to time, from age to age. Sometimes it was sheer journalese; sometimes, especially in pathetic passages and in description, it was verbose and ornate; sometimes, as in *Little Dorrit*, it shows marked, and even studied, mannerisms. Yet, very often, he seems to slip—for I cannot think that it was any more deliberate movement—into extraordinary felicities of phrase. Take them at random, just as they come back upon one's memory; as I took them while I prepared these notes this afternoon. "Mr. Squeers had but one eye, whereas popular prejudice runs in favour of two." Miss Monflathers's favourite pupil, the Baronet's Daughter, was, "by some extraordinary reversal of the laws of nature, not only plain in features, but dull in intellect." The symptoms of nervousness in Mr. Magnus were "loss of appetite, a propensity to upset the tea-things, and a spectral attempt at drollery." (Is there, in the English language, a more expressive collocation of words than "a spectral attempt at drollery"?) The fond father's description of Wackford Squeers, "next door but one to a cherubim"; the politician, "throwing himself upon the country in an auriferous and malty shower"; Captain Swosser's maxim, "If you've got to make pitch hot, you can't make it too hot, and if you swab a deck you should swab it as if Davy Jones was after you." Mrs. Swosser lived, as we know, to be the wife of Professor Dingo, of European reputation, and then of Mr. Bayham Badger. Let her

tribute to her second husband, beautifully worded, close this selection. " People objected to Professor Dingo, when we were staying in the North of Devon, after our marriage, that he disfigured some of the public buildings by chipping off fragments of those edifices with his little geological hammer. But the Professor replied that he knew of no building save the Temple of Science. 'Finely expressed,' said Mr. Badger. The Professor made the same remark in his last illness, when (his mind wandering) he insisted on keeping his little geological hammer under the pillow, and chipping at the countenances of his attendants. The ruling passion! "

This line of thought and illustration might, of course, be indefinitely prolonged, but the subject expands before us, and I must hasten to a close. My conclusion is this: Dickens was not only the greatest, but also the purest, humourist who ever wrote. It has been truly said that " in his writings we have the most convincing proof that it is possible to move both old and young to inextinguishable laughter, without the use of a single expression which could defile the purest or shock the most sensitive." No human being ever was the worse for reading Dickens: thousands have been the better for it; for there is something contagious and inspiring in his zeal against oppression, cruelty, meanness, and wrong, in his " joy of living," his love of nature and the open air,

" And youth and bloom, and this delightful world."

To estimate his influence in these respects, it is only necessary to contrast his writings with the morbid

filth, the melancholy wickedness, which novelists of the present hour—women, alas, as freely as men—pour out like a foetid stream.

My closing words of eulogy shall be borrowed from a Poet, James Rhoades, and a Preacher, Dean Stanley. I take the Preacher first. " If any of you have learnt from his works the eternal value of generosity, purity, kindness, unselfishness, and have learnt to show these in your hearts and lives, these are the best monuments, memorials, and testimonials of one who loved, with a rare and touching love, his friends, his country, and his fellow-men."

And here is the Poet:

" Has he gone to a land of no laughter,
The man who made mirth for us all?
Proves Death but a silent hereafter,
Where the echoes of Earth cannot fall?
Once closed, have the lips no more duty?
No more pleasure the exquisite ears?
Has the heart done o'erflowing with beauty,
As the eyes have with tears?

" Nay—if aught be sure, naught can be surer
Than that earth's good decays not with earth;
And, of all the heart's springs, none are purer
Than the springs of the fountain of Mirth.
He that sounds them has pierced the heart's hollows.
The places where tears are, and sleep;
For the foam-flakes that dance on life's shallows
Are wrung from life's deep."

CHARLES KINGSLEY

CHARLES KINGSLEY

My title to write about Kingsley is twofold. I knew him personally; and one of his books had a very definite influence on the formation of my opinions. Though he has been dead for nine-and-thirty years, my mental vision of him is perfectly clear. He was not, I suppose, above the middle height, but his extreme attenuation made him look taller. There was not a superfluous ounce of flesh on his bones, and he seemed to be compact of wire and whipcord. His features were strongly marked, trenchant nose and prominent chin; his eyes bright and penetrating; his skin furrowed and weather-beaten; his abundant hair and bushy whiskers, originally dark but tinged with grey. In all his movements, actions and gestures he was nervous and restless. It seemed impossible for him to sit still, and, except when he was asleep, his life was an incessant activity. Much of his restlessness was, I imagine, due to his stammer. He loved talking, had an enormous deal to say on every conceivable subject, and longed to say it. But his stammer was always checking him. He gurgled, and gasped, and made faces, and would sometimes break off in a conversation or a meal, rush out into the open air, and liberate his suppressed emotions by rapid exercise or physical exertion. Yet, as has often been observed in similar cases,

when he had to preach, the stammer subsided, and, though there was some facial contortion, the flow of the discourse was never interrupted. He said to his friend Tom Hughes: "I could be as great a talker as any man in England but for my stammering. When I am speaking for God in the pulpit, or praying by bedsides, I never stammer. My stammer is a blessed thing for me. It keeps me from talking in company, and from going out as much as I should do but for it."

One of Kingsley's peculiarities was that, except on Sundays, when he wore a black coat and a white neckcloth, he always dressed like a layman; and in his grey breeches and gaiters, thick shooting-boots, and parti-coloured tie, he might have passed for a farmer, a gamekeeper, or a country gentleman. In his nature and habits he combined some of the attributes of all three characters, if, indeed, they are not really one. He was descended from a family of Kingsleys, who once owned land at Vale Royal in Cheshire, but had, as the phrase is, come down in the world. Charles Kingsley the elder, after spending what was left of his fortune, took Holy Orders, and was successively a curate in Devonshire, a "warming-pan" in Cambridgeshire, and Rector of Chelsea. All these experiences in greater or less degree coloured the life and writings of Charles Kingsley the younger, who was born in 1819, and educated at Magdalene College, Cambridge.

As regards Charles Kingsley's first year at Cambridge, we have his own frank confession: "I was very idle, and very sinful." The rougher elements

of his nature got the upper hand. He gave up religion. He neglected his work. He frequented low company. He sought distraction in every form of sport—boating, hunting, driving, fencing, boxing, duck-shooting in the Fens. He had some vague thoughts of quitting Cambridge and going out to the Far West as a prairie-hunter. In a word, he had drifted from his old moorings (for his training had been rigidly Evangelical), and had not yet found that "Anchor of the Soul" which was to steady his life. The discovery, however, was not long delayed.

During the Long Vacation of 1839 Kingsley was at a garden-party in Oxfordshire, and there he met Miss Fanny Grenfell, whom he eventually married. In after-life he said,—"The 6th of July 1839 was my real wedding day." Miss Grenfell (who is drawn as Argemone in *Yeast*) was ardently religious in the Tractarian way; and under her influence Kingsley soon reverted to a more orderly and scrupulous mode of life. He did not become a Tractarian, but he resumed his habits of prayer and Bible-reading, and "opened his heart to the Light, if the Light would only come." He resolved to obtain a good degree, and, with that end in view, he gave up hunting and shooting, and made "a solemn vow against cards." He read from seven to eight hours a day, and, under the steadying influence of appointed work dutifully done, he began to emerge from doubts and uncertainties. Carlyle's *French Revolution*—surely the least theological of books—had a notable effect on his mind, "establishing and intensifying

his belief in God's righteous government of the world." After he had renounced the wild dreams of his reckless youth, he had chosen the Bar as his profession, and had entered himself as a law-student at Lincoln's Inn. But his views of life were changing, and in 1841 he determined to seek Holy Orders. He thus wrote about himself to his bride-elect: "*Saved*—saved from the wild pride and darkling tempests of scepticism, and from the sensuality and dissipation into which my own rashness and vanity had hurried me before I knew you. Saved from a hunter's life on the Prairies, from becoming a savage, and perhaps worse. Saved from all this, and restored to my country and my God, and *able to believe*."

Throughout his life, whatever Kingsley's hand found to do he did it with his might; and, when he determined to distinguish himself at the University, he worked extremely hard—hard enough, indeed, to injure his health. By these violent exertions he secured a very good degree—a First Class in the Classical Tripos, and a Second in the Mathematical Tripos. His tutor wrote: "It was nothing compared to what might have been attained by a man of his powers"; but considering how he had misused his first and second years at Cambridge, it was marvellous that he accomplished so much in his third.

All this time his innermost thoughts were bent on marriage; but Miss Grenfell's friends were strongly opposed to the alliance, and resisted it by all means in their power. This was in his mind when he wrote a friend: "I have been toiling much harder than my health would allow for the last six months, not be-

cause I felt distinction here an object, but because, having a battle to fight with the world—a bride to win as a penniless adventurer from rich relations,—I found it necessary to attack Mammon with weapons which he could feel and appreciate; and the first weapon thrown in my way was the tangible proof of talent and application, and claim to attention, implied in a good degree."

He had now clearly marked out his line in life. On the 10th of July 1842 he was ordained Deacon by Bishop Sumner of Winchester, and on the morning of the ordination he wrote as follows:—"God's mercies are new every morning. Here I am waiting to be admitted in a few hours to His holy ministry, and take refuge for ever in His Temple. . . . Oh! my soul, my body, my intellect, my very love, I dedicate you all to God."

And now, at the age of twenty-three, he settled down to a curacy in Eversley, on the borders of Hampshire—a pretty place which was destined, though he little guessed it, to be his home during the remainder of his life. Except for his separation from her whom he loved better than his own soul, he was now extremely happy. He had "found himself" and was in his element. "He could fling a flail with the threshers in the barn, turn his scythe with the mowers in the meadow, pitch hay with the hay-makers in the pasture. Knowing every fox-earth on the moors, the 'reedy hover' of the pike, the still hole where the chub lay, he had always a word in sympathy for the huntsman, the keeper, or even the poacher. With the farmer he discussed the

rotation of crops, and with the labourer the science of hedging and ditching." There were kennels in the parish, at Bramshill House, where Sir John Cope was Master of the Hounds afterwards known as Mr. Garth's; and there Kingsley's knowledge of horse-flesh and fondness for sport (though he seldom indulged it) made him so popular that, when he first announced a Confirmation and invited those who required it to come to him for instruction, the whips and the stablemen sent a message to say that they had all been confirmed once, but that, if Mr. Kingsley wished it, they would all be happy to come again. He was ordained Priest at the end of a year's diaconate. "Wonderful Grace of God, that I should now be God's priest and servant! I often read 1 Cor. xv. 8, 9, with tears. . . . I am getting very strong, and have been threshing wheat a good deal these last two wet days, which is splendid exercise." Thus passed the years of his apprenticeship. In 1844 the rectory of Eversley fell vacant; Kingsley was appointed to it, and, before he had actually taken possession of it, he was married. The self-effacing devotion of five years was at length, and abundantly, rewarded.

Thus far, we have only brought Kingsley to the threshold of his life's work. That work, so far as it was peculiar to himself and outside the ordinary lines of clerical activity, began with the year of revolution—1848. There had been a time of disheartenment and disillusion. The Reform Act of 1832, concerning which such glorious things had been prophesied, did not produce the Millennium. The

working people found that political power, wrenched from the aristocracy, had passed into the hands of the mercantile and trading classes, and that Labour had derived no advantage from the transfer. The political leaders of the Democracy, untaught by experience, still believed that merely political reforms could cure the evils under which the poor suffered, and clamoured for a new Reform Act. The five objects for which they agitated were: Universal Suffrage, Ballot, Payment of Members, Electoral Districts, and the Abolition of the Property Qualification for Parliament. These points constituted what was called " The People's Charter," and " Chartism " became a recognized, and dreaded, element in national life. To political unrest was added the stimulus of physical suffering. The winter of 1847-1848 was marked by widespread distress, and the poor in town and country alike, were seeking angrily for deliverance from intolerable evils. The spring of 1848 brought this disturbance to a climax. Thrones went down with a crash all over Europe, and it seemed not unlikely that the political convulsion would spread to England. There were dangerous riots in London, Edinburgh, Glasgow, and Liverpool; men's hearts failing them for fear and for looking after those things that were coming on the earth.

Kingsley, whose pen could never be idle when his feelings were stirred, uttered his soul in *Yeast.* It is a curious, disorderly, miscellaneous book, beginning as a novel (with an admirable account of fox-hunting) and ending in a kind of phantasmagoria; but valuable because wrought out of the

author's experiences as a country parson in a district where moral and sanitary reforms were equally disregarded, and where the flagrant iniquity of the Game Laws incited, only too successfully, to murder. *Yeast* is, in short, Kingsley's plea for the Agricultural Poor; and, before the ink was dry on the last page, he had flung himself into the cause of the Poor in London. The Rev. F. D. Maurice, then Reader at Lincoln's Inn, had gathered round him a little band of ardent reformers, who realized, as the politicians did not, that political reform is related to social reform only as the means to the end; and who, because they avowedly based their public actions on the principles of the Gospel, acquired the nickname of "Christian Socialists." To these men, about whom I have often spoken, Kingsley joined himself, and threw all his energy into the service of the People's cause. The 10th of April 1848 had been appointed as the day of a great Chartist Demonstartion on Kennington Common, and timid Londoners worked themselves into indescribable panic. They firmly believed that their shops were to be looted and their dwellings burnt down; and that there were to be concerted attacks on the Bank, the Tower, the Government offices, and the Houses of Parliament. The defence of London against its visionary foes was entrusted to the Duke of Wellington, who, by the simple expedient of barricading the bridges, produced an absolute calm. Heavy rain drenched the oratory on Kennington Common. The police arrested a few ring-leaders, and the Monster Petition in favour of the Charter was taken to the

House of Commons in a four-wheeled cab. Panic gave place to laughter. Then, of course, there ensued a reaction. The respectable classes, who had been the most sorely frightened, were now the most offensively brave; and it became the cant of the moment to say, not only that Chartism was a spent force, but also that poverty and misery and oppression were the dreams of crack-brained sentimentalists, and that the poor, whether in town or country, had nothing to complain of. This reaction from abject terror to comfortable callousness gave Kingsley his opportunity. In concert with the other Christian Socialists, he set to work, with the object of showing that, though the good sense and good temper of the people had averted a disaster, still the poor were labouring under intolerable, undeserved, and remediable wrongs. A series of articles on "London Labour and the London Poor," published in the *Morning Chronicle*, showed such as were willing to learn that there was really a great mass of misery at the base of a boastful civilization; and the Christian Socialists, in order to show the best ways of remedying it, began to issue a series of tracts called "Politics for the People." In the first of these Kingsley declared himself in favour of the Charter, but complained that it did not go far enough. It stopped with a reconstruction of political machinery, but said nothing of the social reform which that machinery, if it was to be worth anything, must produce. In the second, borrowing a name from the Chartist literature of the time, he announced that there was a true "Reformer's Guide"

—even the Bible, which contained "the voice of God against tyrants, idlers, and humbugs." In subsequent numbers he extolled "A Fair Day's Work for a Fair Day's Wages"; protested against the "Devil's Gospel of Unrestricted Competition"; and poured scorn on the Malthusian doctrine that the resources of the earth were inadequate for the lives which God might plant on it. He also contributed some admirable papers on the National Gallery and the British Museum, intended to interest the workers in their own property, and several of the most stirring ballads which he subsequently wove into his novels. Under the pressure of all this exciting work, added to his ordinary duties as a Parish Priest, his health temporarily broke down. He had to quit Eversley for a space, and, while he was recuperating at the seaside, he wrote *Alton Locke, Tailor and Poet.* This book was intended to be a protest on behalf of the poor in London, urging their claims on the same grounds as those on which, in *Yeast*, he had pleaded for the agricultural labourers. In choosing a tailor for his hero he directed attention to the disgusting abuses of the tailoring trade, which he had already exposed in a famous tract called "Cheap Clothes and Nasty." Of course it is not to be conceived that a man of Kingsley's fiery temperament, writing as the passion of the moment whirled him along, could escape unjust, or even just, criticism. Of unjust criticism he had more than enough, perverting his doctrine and exhibiting him as a teacher of heresy and profligacy. Of juster criticism, touching rather style than substance, a specimen is afforded by the gentle author

of *Rab and his Friends*, who wrote thus of *Alton Locke*:—"A book which is my especial horror, as being of the 'tremendous' school of literature, everything at highest pitch—words, sentiments, politics, religion, character (if it deserves the name), conversation."

Another, and a striking, incident of Kingsley's career as a social reformer remains to be told. The "Great Exhibition" of 1851, following in happy contrast on the tumults and revolutions of 1848, seemed to be, as some one said, an International Sacrament of Social Peace and Goodwill. Immense crowds of strangers were drawn to London, and for their benefit many of the clergy threw open their churches and organized courses of sermons on the great topic of the day. At the request of the Incumbent of St. John's, Fitzroy Square, Kingsley undertook to preach one of these sermons, choosing for his subject (at Maurice's suggestion) "The Message of the Church to Labouring Men." The text was: "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because He hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor." What, the preacher asked, is the Gospel? It is Freedom, Equality, and Brotherhood. Freedom, where a man is free to do, not what he likes, but what he ought; Equality, where each man has equal opportunity to educate and use his faculties; Brotherhood, where a man believes that all men are his brothers, not by the will of the flesh, but by the will of God. The Bible proclaims Freedom from external tyranny and internal passion; Baptism proclaims Equality, as the rain that falls alike on

the evil and on the good; the Eucharist proclaims Brotherhood, by the one Bread which unites all who receive it into one Body. The preacher concluded thus:

" God is my witness that I speak the truth when I tell you that these thoughts are not matters of doctrine but of experience. There is one man at least in this church now who has been awakened from the selfish, luxurious dreams of his youth, by that message of the Bible and of the Sacraments, to see the dignity of the People's cause—to feel it at once the most peremptory of duties and the most glorious of privileges to proclaim, in the name of Jesus of Nazareth, the message of the Church of Christ—that the will of God is, good news to the poor, deliverance to the captives, healing to the broken-hearted, light to the ignorant, liberty to the crushed; and, to the degraded masses, " *the acceptable year of the Lord* "—a share and a stake, for them and for their children after them, in the soil, the wealth, the civilization, and the government of this English land."

As to what ensued, let us hear Mr. Thomas Hughes, who was present:—" At the end of his sermon the Incumbent got up at the altar and declared his belief that great part of the doctrine of the sermon was untrue, and that he had expected a sermon of an entirely different kind. To a man of the preacher's vehement temperament it must have required a great effort not to reply at the moment. The congregation was keenly excited, and evidently expected him to do so. He only bowed his head, pronounced

the blessing, and came down from the pulpit." He passed straight through the crowd of working men that thronged him with outstretched hands and an eager " God bless you, sir," on their lips, and went into the vestry, where his friends gathered round him to express their sympathy, and to take the sermon from him that it might be printed exactly as it was written. This was done, and a stained and tattered copy lies before me as I write.

The remainder of Kingsley's career was perhaps more decorous, but certainly less interesting. He became in turn a Cambridge Professor, a Court Chaplain, and a Cathedral dignitary. Unwittingly, he rendered one conspicuous service to English literature, for, by his clumsy and ill-mannered attack on Newman's veracity, he elicited the *Apologia*. Though he had a fanatical horror of Romanism, he had always been a staunch believer in the Church, the Priesthood, and the Sacraments. In his later days he astonished those who had only known him superficially by coming forward as one of the boldest champions of the Athanasian Creed, and an insistent teacher of the truth of the Intermediate State. He was still in the fulness of bodily and mental activity when he died of neglected pneumonia in his fifty-sixth year.

JAMES PAYN

JAMES PAYN

James Payn was born in 1830, and spent his early life at Maidenhead. His father was Clerk to the Thames Commissioners, a keen sportsman, an active man of business, and a leading figure in local society. Young Payn was early initiated into the sports of the field, and rode his pony fearlessly with the Old Berkshire Hounds. But hunting bored him, and he cordially detested all athletic exercises. It is recorded that his cricket ended when he stopped a ball with the crown of his straw hat. At eleven he was sent to Eton, a sensitive, precocious boy; and he used to say that his earliest experience of misery was the rejection of an article which he sent to the school-magazine. The only traces which "Henry's holy shade" left on him were its gentlemanlike "Tone" (at which he was never tired of laughing) and a dislike of Greek which amounted to a personal enmity. From Eton he went to Woolwich, with the desperate design of entering the scientific branch of the army; but the only result of the experiment was to inspire him with a hatred of all things military. His parents now resolved that he should be a clergyman, and, with that end in view, he went to a private tutor's in Devonshire, where he made his

first appearance in print. He began with a poem, which was published in *Leigh Hunt's Journal*, and he soon was writing articles for *Bentley's Miscellany* and *Household Words*.

In October 1849 he went up to Trinity College, Cambridge; read very sparingly, took no exercise, but cultivated, and was cultivated by, all the pleasantest society in college, and published his first book, *Stories from Boccaccio*. The time had now arrived when he must decide on his career. He realized—as every one who knew him must have realized—that he had no vocation to Holy Orders; whereas he had an even passionate love for literature, and gifts which formed the natural equipment for a literary career. He took his degree in 1852, being already engaged, and was married in 1854. It was, if ever there was, a love-match. With his wife he settled at Ambleside, and for some years he "lived an idyllic life at Rydal Cottage, under the shadow of Nab Scar." His writings are full of memories of this time. An essay called "An Exceedingly Cheap Tour" describes a progress which he made from one district of the Lakes to another, telling the landlord of each inn in turn that he was collecting material for a *Tourist's Hand-Book and Guide to the English Lakes*. The desire to be commended in this guide-book for good accommodation and moderate charges was so strong in each innkeeping breast that the bills grew smaller and smaller as the tour proceeded, and at last "there was quite a difficulty in getting them to charge anything at all."

In the summer of 1857 some old friends from Cam-

bridge, among whom was the ever-beloved " C.S.C.," met Payn at Ambleside. By the magical spell of good-fellowship they induced him to make the unprecedented effort of climbing Scafell; and, as he lagged miserably towards the summit, Calverley made the admirably apt quotation:

" The labour *we* delight in physics Payn! "

In 1858 Payn settled himself in Edinburgh as editor of *Chambers' Journal.* He worked so vigorously that the proprietors remarked that, what with his salary as editor, and what with the payments which he received for his contributions, he left very little for the House of Chambers. He liked his work, but he disliked Edinburgh. A Scottish Sabbath was more than he could tolerate, and the east winds were bad for delicate wife and children. In vain Robert Chambers assured him that the same " isothermal band " passed through Edinburgh and London. " I know nothing about isothermal bands," said Payn, " but I know that I never saw a four-wheeled cab blown upside down in London." So to London he bent his steps, retaining the editorship of *Chambers' Journal;* and settled in Maida Vale. His impressions of the metropolis as it was in 1861 are given in a delightful little book called *Melibœus in London.* It was a prime favourite with the writer, who always attributed its failure to its outlandish title. The description of the fire in Southwark, in which the heroic Braidwood lost his life, is one of the most vivid pen-pictures that I know.

Payn's life was now exactly what he enjoyed, for

it was one incessant round of literary activity. He took no holidays, for he hated them. If he was forced into the country for a week or two, he used the exile as the material for a story or an essay. The whole burden of editorship was on his shoulders; and, at the same time, he was writing his first novels. *Lost Sir Massingberd*, the story of the wicked baronet who fell into the hollow trunk of an oak and was starved to death, ran in *Chambers's Journal* through the year 1864, and raised the circulation by twenty thousand copies. From first to last, Payn wrote more than a hundred volumes of one sort or another. *By Proxy* has been justly admired for the wonderful accuracy of its local colour, and for a masterly knowledge of Chinese character, which the writer drew exclusively from encyclopædias and books of travel. But for all that, Payn, in my judgment, was at his best in the short story. He practised that difficult art long before it became popular, and a book, called originally *People, Places, and Things*, but now *Humorous Stories*, is a masterpiece of fun, invention, and observation. In 1874 he became "Reader" to Messrs. Smith & Elder, and in that capacity had the happiness of discovering *Vice Versa*, and the less felicitous experience of rejecting *John Inglesant* as unreadable.

It was at this period of his life that I first encountered Payn, and I fell at once under his charm. He was not a faultless character; for he was irritable, petulant, and prejudiced. He took the strongest dislikes, sometimes on very slight grounds; was unrestrained in expressing them, and was apt to

treat very cavalierly opinions which he did not share. But none of these faults could obscure his charm. He was the most tender-hearted of human beings, and the sight, even the thought, of cruelty set his blood on fire. Though he was intensely humane, he was absolutely free from mawkishness; and a wife-beater, or a child-torturer, or a cattle-maimer would have had short shrift at his hands. He was genuinely sympathetic, especially towards the hopes and struggles of the young and the unbefriended. Many an author, once struggling but now triumphant, could attest this trait. But his chief charm was his humour. It was absolutely natural; bubbled like a fountain, and danced like light. Nothing escaped it, and solemnity only stimulated it to further activities. He had the power, which Sydney Smith extolled, of "abating and dissolving pompous gentlemen with the most successful ridicule"; and, when he was offended, the ridicule had a remarkably sharp point. It was, of course, impossible that all the humour of a man who joked incessantly could be equally good. Sometimes it was rather boyish, playing on proper names or personal peculiarities; and sometimes it descended to puns. But, for sheer rapidity, I have never known Payn's equal. When a casual word annoyed him, his repartee flashed out like lightning. I could give plenty of instances, but to make them intelligible I should have to give a considerable amount of introduction, and that would entirely spoil the sense of flashing rapidity. There was no appreciable interval of time between the provoking word and the repartee which it provoked.

Another great element of charm in Payn was his warm love of life, and youth, and all innocent enjoyment. While he hated the black and savage and sordid side of life with a passionate hatred, he enjoyed all its better—which he believed to be its larger—part with an infectious relish. Never have I known a more blithe and friendly spirit; never a nature to which Literature and Society—books and men—yielded a more constant and exhilarating joy. He had unstinted admiration for the performances of others, and was wholly free from jealousy. His temperament was not equable. He had ups and downs, bright moods and dark, seasons of exaltation and seasons of depression. The one succeeded the other with startling rapidity, but the bright moods triumphed, and it was impossible to keep him permanently depressed. His health had always been delicate, but illness neither crushed his spirit nor paralysed his pen. Once he broke a blood-vessel in the street, and was conveyed home in an ambulance. During the transit, though he was in some danger of bleeding to death, he began to compose a narrative of his adventure, and next week it appeared in the *Illustrated London News*.

During the last two years of his life he was painfully crippled by arthritic rheumatism, and could no longer visit the Reform Club, where for many years he had every day eaten his luncheon and played his rubber. Determining that he should not completely lose his favourite, or I should rather say his only, amusement, some members of the Club banded themselves together to supply him with a rubber

in his own house twice a week; and this practice was maintained to his death. It was a striking testimony to the affection which he inspired. In those years I was a pretty frequent visitor, and, on my way to the house, I used to bethink me of stories which might amuse him, and I used even to note them down between one visit and another, as a provision for next time. One day Payn said, "A collection of your stories would make a book, and I think Smith & Elder would publish it." I thought my anecdotage scarcely worthy of so much honour; but I promised to make a weekly experiment in the *Manchester Guardian*. My "Collections and Recollections" ran through the year 1897, and appeared in book form at Easter 1898. But Payn had died on the 25th of the previous March; and the book, which I had hoped to put into his hand, I could only inscribe to his delightful memory.

MATTHEW ARNOLD

MATTHEW ARNOLD

CRITICS have sometimes commented on the frequency with which, in my writings, I refer to Matthew Arnold. They tell me that I am saturated with his diction, that my style is modelled on his prose, and that I quote his phrases with undue iteration. Not long ago the criticism was launched in a humorous form by the promoters of a recreation, to me unknown, called Pop-in-Taw, who wrote thus: "Mr. G. W. E. Russell in the *Manchester Guardian* collects his early Recollections of the game, which go back to his school-days at Harrow. He recalls the late Mr. Gladstone's indignation at the simitar play of Beaconsfield, and how as a young man he himself played at Pop-in-Taw with the Duchess of Bedford, Dr. Pusey, and Mr. Matthew Arnold."

Of "simitar play" (so spelt) and its iniquities I know nothing, but the collocation of names pleases me; and a game, whether bridge or golf or lawn-tennis or four-handed chess, in which the four persons named were participators, would have presented some interesting features. The Duchess would have contributed grace, Dr. Pusey vigour, Matthew Arnold suavity, and the present writer an intelligent appreciation of the performances of the

other three. When it was over, all would have agreed that Matthew Arnold was the most delightful playfellow they ever had—he lost so cheerfully, and won so modestly; never found fault with his partner, and declared that the feeblest beginner only wanted a little more practice to play a capital game. In this judgment Arnold would have himself concurred; even as, when one quoted from his writings, he would artlessly enquire, "Did I say that? How good that was!" What Arnold would have been at Pop-in-Taw, had the game been invented in his time, that he was in all the transactions of actual life. I have always been profoundly grateful for the chance which, when I was still a schoolboy, brought me within the sphere of that fascinating influence.

On the 30th of October 1867 Arnold, whose home was then in London, wrote to his friend Lady de Rothschild: "We are fairly driven out of Chester Square, partly by the number of our children, partly by the necessity of a better school for the boys; and we have fixed on Harrow. The clay soil is the only objection, but the grass fields and hedgerow elms are a great attraction for me." It was eminently characteristic of this most humane of scholars thus to link the natural amenities with the educational advantages of the place. "I only wish you could eat our strawberries. We have two great dishes every day, and I see no prospect of an end to them." "I have had a long walk with Rover in the fields beyond Northolt, which are quiet and solemn in this gray weather beyond belief." "I have had a capital game at racquets with C———, a friend of the boys,

and have been round the garden to look at the wild daffodils, which are coming on beautifully." "Your verses gave me very great pleasure. Nothing will ever eradicate from me the feeling of the greater suitableness and adequateness, for a topic of this kind, of Latin elegiacs than of any other description of verse."

I quote these passages at haphazard from Arnold's letters written at Harrow, in order to show the sort of man who swam into our ken when I was a boy of fifteen. Ignorant as schoolboys proverbially are, we yet know the name of Arnold, and some of us, a little more alert than the others, knew that Dr. Arnold's son Matthew was renowned as a poet and a critic—in short, "a swell." But what we did not expect was to find this distinguished stranger a young, active, and singularly graceful man; interested in all games and sports; a splendid swimmer and fisherman; wholly free from pomposity and stiffness; overflowing with humour, and pleasantly unguarded in speech. "I suppose you know Dr. Vaughan, sir," said I, tremulously naming the tutelary deity of Harrow—"he must have been at Rugby about your time." "Oh, yes. I know dear old Vaughan—a good creature, but brutally ignorant." I suppose that there was something iconoclastic in my nature, for this brief epitome of Vaughan's character, and the culture of a Senior Classic, filled me with delight.

Arnold's eldest son was a very delicate and a singularly attractive boy, who soon became a great friend of mine, invited me to his home, and introduced me to his family. Thus began a friendship

which had lasted till to-day. Fifteen is a receptive age, and it is not very curious that this early introduction to the chief of critics should have made a permanent dint on a schoolboy's mind. Boys who write are nearly always flamboyant. They adore rhetoric, admire Macaulay, and try to write accordingly. But here was the author of *Essays in Criticism*, always kindly interested in the most immature and unpromising efforts, and always ready with the pruning-knife. The perils of "Middle-class Macaulayese," the "note of Provinciality in literature," the difference between "Asiatic and Attic prose," the "desperate attempt to make a platitude endurable by making it pompous"—these were topics to which he introduced us, and the introduction was not in vain. "Tell H. to do more in literature; he has a talent for it; but to avoid Carlylese as he would the devil." Admonitions of this kind fell constantly on our ears, and could scarcely fail to correct the redundancy of youth.

There is another debt, and perhaps a greater, which I owe to this early intimacy. Arnold first taught me to think; before, I only knew how to argue. His "sinuous, easy, unpolemical method" led one almost imperceptibly into new ways of thought. He was always teaching one to "make a return upon oneself," to see "things as they really are," to disabuse one's mind of claptrap, and to challenge hoary conventions. We repeated, as all boys repeat, the shibboleths of Toryism or Radicalism or Ritualism or Rationalism, or any other "ism" to which one had attached oneself; and

it was invaluable discipline to be forced back from phrases to things, and to hear, at the end of a florid generalization—"But can we quite say that?" In those days we were Radicals of a utilitarian type. We believed tremendously in Acts of Parliament, and were persuaded that, if only we could disestablish churches and extend the suffrage and overset the monarchy, we should precipitate the Millennium. It did us great good, though it irritated us, to be reminded that the most degraded misery, the darkest ignorance, the lowest standards of morals and life, may coexist with a beautifully organized system of government, and that the political machinery with which we wished to be endlessly tinkering was only valuable so far as it tended to make life brighter, happier, and more humane. By being Arnold's disciples we did not unlearn our Radicalism, but we learned to wear it with a difference, and to realize that political reform is related to Social Reform only as the means to the end.

Of Matthew Arnold's theology, once the subject of such acrid controversy, this is scarcely the place to write; and indeed it was marked by a freakishness which often hindered its good effect. Yet he rendered conspicuous service by poking fun at "the old Liberal hacks," "the modern Sadducees, who believe neither in angel nor spirit, but only in Mr. Herbert Spencer." To those grim oracles Arnold replied that religion is the most gracious and beautiful thing in the world; that Isaiah and St. Paul are writers to be read with human interest as well as spiritual appetite; and that the characteristically

Christian virtues, Charity and Chastity—kindness and pureness—are the chief goods of national life. He told me once that his book of *Discourses in America* was, of all his prose-writings, the one by which he most wished to be remembered after his death. It was a memorable choice, for in those Discourses the humorist, the master of style, the fastidious critic, sinks into the background, and the figure that emerges is the uncompromising teacher of an ethical system drawn straight from the New Testament.

"The individual Englishman, whenever and wherever called upon to do his duty, does it almost invariably with the old energy, courage, virtue. And this is what we gain by having had, as a people, in the ground of our being, a firm faith in conduct; by having believed, more steadfastly and fervently than most, this great law that moral causes govern the standing and the falling of men and nations. The law gradually widens, indeed, so as to include Light as well as Honesty and Energy—to make Light, also, a moral cause. Unless we are transformed we cannot finally stand, and without more light we cannot be transformed."

To many—perhaps most—of my readers Matthew Arnold is dearer and more familiar as a poet than as a prose-writer; but his poetic work and value cannot be properly estimated at the fag-end of a chapter, though perhaps they may soon claim a whole chapter for themselves. Here I have merely been attempting to account for an influence, of which the traces seem to be apparent in my ways of thought

and speech. If this be so, I am a proud as well as a grateful disciple.

I first saw Matthew Arnold at Harrow on the 28th of April 1868. On the 15th of April 1888 he wrote to me from Liverpool.[1] That day he died. *Lux perpetua luceat ei.*

[1] "S—— has written a letter full of shriekings and cursings about my innocent article; the Americans will get their notion of it from that, and I shall never be able to enter America again."

ARNOLD AS POET

ARNOLD AS POET

I HAVE sometimes been told that I overrate Arnold as a prose-writer and underrate him as a poet. Of his prose I now say nothing, and with regard to his poetry I am content to accept his own self-judgment.

"My poems," he wrote in 1869—"my poems represent on the whole the main movement of mind of the last quarter of a century, and thus they will probably have their day as people become conscious to themselves of what that movement of mind is, and interested in the literary productions which reflect it. It might be fairly urged that I have less poetic sentiment than Tennyson, and less intellectual vigour and abundance than Browning, Yet, because I have more perhaps of a fusion of the two than either of them, and have more regularly applied that fusion to the main line of modern development, I am likely enough to have my turn, as they have had theirs."

In this passage Arnold seems to ignore the most obvious reason for the undoubted fact that, at the time when he was writing, both Tennyson and Browning enjoyed a far wider popularity than his. That reason, I think, was that they both had given their whole lives to their art, whereas Arnold only wrote in the scanty leisure-hours of a laborious profession. If circumstances had enabled him to give himself wholly to poetry he would have written more; he

would have commanded a wider audience, and would have obtained that firm touch and assured mastery of his art without which no man can hope to dominate his readers. The divinity who presides over poetry rejects a half-hearted service, or at best rewards it with a partial and qualified success. Arnold gave up to school-inspecting what was meant for the delectation of mankind; and this, not because he loved the work—how could he?—but because he wished to marry. When he retired from official life he made this frank confession to the assembled school-teachers who had presented him with a testimonial:—

"Though I am a schoolmaster's son, I confess that school-teaching or school-inspecting is not the line of life I should naturally have chosen. I adopted it in order to marry a lady who is here to-night, and who feels your kindness as warmly and gratefully as I do. My wife and I had a wandering life of it at first. There were but three lay-inspectors for all England. My district went right across from Pembroke Dock to Great Yarmouth. We had no home. One of our children was born in a lodging at Derby, with a workhouse, if I recollect aright, behind, and a penitentiary in front. But the *irksomeness* of my new duties is what I felt most, and during the first year or so it was sometimes insupportable."

Contrast this hurried, exhausting, and yet unsatisfactory life with the experiences of Tennyson and Browning. When Arnold ought to have been meditating, in undistracted peace,

he was examining little girls in needlework (of which he did not know a stitch) and little boys in music (of which he did not know a note), and listening to lessons on "Avalanches—The Steam-Engine—The Thames—India Rubber—Bricks—The Battle of Poictiers—Subtraction—The Reindeer—The Gunpowder Plot—The Jordan." While he was thus employed Browning was stretched on the turf among the rose-trees in his father's garden, or tracking Shelley's footsteps in the Euganean Hills, or floating in Venetian sunshine. Tennyson was declaiming his earliest and most perfect lyrics as he strode over the Lincolnshire Wolds, or studying nature with a lover-like assiduity in the recesses of the Trossachs and the Tintern woods.

Had Arnold been able or willing thus to give his whole heart and life, till he was forty, to his art, he would have been a better artist. He would have acquired more ease and fluency. He always longed for poetic utterance, as his only adequate vent, and sought it earnestly with tears; but the effort is too perceptible and the result sometimes disappointing. Yet though, with more abundant leisure, Arnold would have been a better artist, his poetry could never have been popular. In the first place, it is profoundly, if not morbidly, melancholy; and, as he himself said, "the life of the people is such that in their literature they require joy." But not only his thought—his very style—is anti-popular. Much of his most elaborate work is in blank-verse, and much in exotic and unaccustomed metres. And again, his ear often played him false. His rhymes are some-

times only true to the eye, and his lines are overcrowded with jolting monosyllables.

> " The sandy spits, the shore-lock'd lakes,
> Couldst thou no better keep, O Abbey old?
> The strange-scrawl'd rocks, the lonely sky."

These lines, Mr. Frederic Harrison cites as proof that, " where Nature has withheld the ear for music, no labour and no art can supply the want." And I think that even a disciple may without disloyalty add to the collection—

> " As the punt's rope chops round."

Yet, when all these admissions have been made, it remains true that Arnold was a poet, and that his poetic quality was pure and rare. We saw just now that he said of himself, long before he had come to his full fame, " I am likely enough to have my turn." He had it, very definitely, and for the reason, which he gave above—that he had applied his " fusion " of poetic gifts to " the main line of modern development" —or, in other words, that his poetry interpreted certain tendencies of thought which swayed men's minds in reaction from the Anglican revival. He revolted against what he called

> " Pullulating rites, externe and vain,"

though he felt, as keenly as any one, the " enchantments " of the Catholic religion. He dismissed, with a rather excessive contempt, the idea which Wordsworth had so gloriously embodied—that the recollections of childhood may be " Intimations of Immortality." The joy which the poets of all ages have

agreed to seek in "hope, and a renovation without end," he found in the immediate contemplation of present good. He was deeply imbued by the sense that human existence, at its best, is inadequate and disappointing. With stately resignation, he accepted the common fate, and turned a glance of calm disdain on all endeavours after a spurious consolation. He did not question the abstract freedom of the will, but he saw that in its exercise it was circumscribed and hampered. All round he seemed to see

> "Un-o'erleaped Mountains of Necessity,
> Sparing us narrower margin than we dream."

In a passage of pathetic beauty, he likened his lot to that of the cloistered votaries of a decaying faith.

> "Wandering between two worlds, one dead,
> The other powerless to be born,
> With nowhere yet to rest my head,
> Like these, on earth I wait forlorn."

When he wrote that disconsolate stanza, it did indeed seem as if all faith were decaying. The dogmatic presumptions of the past had been rudely questioned. "Liberalism," in the sense which Newman abhorred, had laid waste the sanctuaries of tradition. "Lord, the heathen are come into Thine inheritance," was the cry of many hearts. "When the Son of Man cometh, shall He find faith on the earth?" was a question which refused to be silenced. The old world, of authority, prescription, tradition, seemed to be fading away. The scientific temper was dominant. Men were told that nothing was credible except what could be proved by an appeal, in the last resort, to the

organs of sense. The new world, in which Ethic should once again be exalted above Logic, and the spiritual forces of human life should again challenge the denials of materialism, was as yet "powerless to be born." It is true that Arnold lived through this forlorn interval, and saw at least the beginnings of the "Second Spring"; but his poetry belongs to the period of transition, and bears on every page the traces of a spirit which longs to believe, but finds belief impossible—a "sad lucidity of soul." In "A Wish" the poet discards the conventional consolations of a deathbed, and entreats his friends to place him at the open window that he may see yet once again—

> "Bathed in the sacred dews of morn
> The wide aerial landscape spread—
> The world which was ere I was born,
> The world which lasts when I am dead;
>
> "Which never was the friend of *one*,
> Nor promised love it could not give,
> "But lit for all its generous sun,
> And lived itself, and made us live."

This solemn love and reverence for the continuous life of the physical universe may remind us that Arnold's teaching about Humanity, subtle and searching as it is, has done less to endear him to many of his disciples than his feeling for Nature. The mood of pensive introspection, the mood of unsatisfied longing, in which so much of his poetry is written, appeals only to certain souls at certain stages of their experience. But, when he turns from the perplexities of the human lot to the loving contemplation of the "Mighty Mother," he is at his best and brightest.

He shakes off his melancholy; he steps gaily into the light and air; and we follow him with bounding pulse up "the awful Alpine track," or down the "broad, lucent Arno Vale," through "the cheerful silence of the Fells," or across "the stripling Thames at Bablock Hithe."

Arnold's Nature-worship is, in his writing, as it was in his life, the antidote to his melancholy. When he gazes on the sunrise in the "Valais depth profound," or the purple fritillaries in the "river-fields," or "the blossoms red and white of fallen May," he forgets, at least for the moment, the "stern law of every mortal lot," which at other times presses so heavily on his soul. And then he performs for us his readers exactly the office which in his "Memorial Verses" he ascribes to Wordsworth:—

> "He laid us as we lay at birth
> On the cool flowery lap of earth;
> Smiles broke from us and we had ease,
> The hills were round us, and the breeze
> Went o'er the sunlit fields again,
> Our foreheads felt the wind and rain.
> Our youth returned, for there was shed
> On spirits that had long been dead,
> Spirits dried up, and closely furl'd,
> The freshness of the early world."

THE SCHOLAR

THE SCHOLAR

Once on a time I wrote a series of "Social Silhouettes." They were attempts to depict various types of men as affected by the circumstances of their life and occupation. One type which I omitted was the Scholar; and this was because the Scholar, as distinct from the Teacher or Professor, is now so rare a character that very few readers would recognize his portrait. For by "The Scholar" I mean the man who devotes his life to the disinterested pursuit of knowledge; with no ulterior aims to serve, and with no intention of applying what he has learnt to any practical purpose. In days gone by, this type of character abounded, not only in universities, which were its natural home, but in all sorts of unlooked-for quarters—in country houses, in Scottish Castles, in Cathedral Closes, in rural Parsonages, in the Temple and Lincoln's Inn, and in the Athenæum Club—even, sometimes, by gross dereliction of official duty, in Whitehall and Somerset House. The Scholar, as then understood, studied because he wished to know; and, though he might, towards the end of his life, put forth a Monograph, a Tractate, or a Treatise, the object to which he devoted his days was not publication but Learning:

"This man decided not to Live but Know."

The Scholar, thus understood, has not always been appreciated as highly as he deserved. Though Browning did his best for him, he has generally been the butt of rhymesters and romancists:

> " Did you ever observe in the very ripe scholar
> A silent contempt for all outward display?
> His clothes fit him ill, from his boots to his collar,
> His hair is unbrushed, or else brushed the wrong way.
> With sleeves very long, overlapping his fingers,
> He's spinally crooked, and wanting in grace;
> And mental abstraction provokingly lingers
> In every turn of his figure and face."

George Eliot was downright spiteful about poor old Mr. Casaubon, " chewing the cud of erudite mistake about Cush and Misraim." Mrs. Ward's Edward Langham was an even weaker vessel than his pupil, Robert Elsmere. Sir Walter made merry over Dominie Sampson's social shortcomings and the erudition of Erasmus Holiday. The author of *The Anatomy of Melancholy*—himself a Scholar, if ever there was one—drew this unflattering portrait of his order: " Hard students are commonly troubled with gowts, catarrhes, rheums, *cachexia*, *bradypepsia*, bad eyes, stone, and collick, crudities, oppilations, *vertigo*, winds, consumptions, and all such diseases as come by overmuch sitting; they are most part lean, dry, ill-coloured; spend their fortunes, lose their wits, and many times their lives; and all through immoderate pains and extraordinary studies."

This string of afflictions is long enough without the addition of moral reproaches. Yet this is the hortation which a famous divine, preaching before the University of Cambridge, addressed to the Scholars of the Cam:

" A man may be a diligent student, and yet ' live to himself.' Indeed there is in that contracted and self-contained life, even in more than one of greater expansion and variety, a peculiar risk of doing so. That daily hoarding of intellectual stores, that daily revelling in literary or scientific pursuits, is one of the strongest illustrations of a refined and elevated selfishness. Let a man who reads in youth read with a view to active work in his generation; let a man who reads on still in age also write, and the charge of mere selfishness must be mitigated or withdrawn—mitigated, if the man proposes to communicate; withdrawn, if he is enabled to consecrate."

It is evident that the preacher had a poor opinion of the Scholar, as defined above. In his eyes the young scholar was only respectable if he was studying with a view to " active work in his generation "; the older scholar, if he was preparing a book. To " communicate " meant, in the preacher's mouth, to teach, to write, in some form to impart; to " consecrate " meant to write definitely for high objects, and the improvement of the reader. Such notions as these, all disparaging to the career and character of the disinterested scholar, have acquired so strong a hold upon the modern world that the few people who read at all seem quite ashamed of themselves unless they can aver that they are reading for some practical object. They are teaching schoolboys or undergraduates; or they are qualifying for a Professorship; or they are going to lecture in America; or they are contributing to a History of Crete in twenty volumes; or they are busy at a new theory

of Criticism which will sweep all churches and creeds into the dust-bin. But always and in all things they are practical. They learn, not for learning's sake, but with a single eye to performance—and emolument. A student of this type said to a younger man whom he found busy with a book on geology, "Will geology be of any use to you with your pupils next term?" "No." "Then isn't it rather a pity?" Of a famous Aristotelian it was said—"Does he read Aristotle for pleasure?" "No; he edits him for profit." I myself know a Senior Classic of whom his intimate friends aver that since he got his fellowship they have never known him open a Greek or Latin book. "He is a man of affairs, and reads his *Times*."

From students and study of this type one turns with a keen sense of refreshment to a case such as that of Walter Headlam, whose Memoir has just been published by his brother.[1] He was a Scholar in the sense in which I defined the term. He read because he wanted to know more—to know all—of a subject which fascinated him. He lived his adult life in the beautiful precincts of King's College, Cambridge, "studying in the grand manner which he held was alone worth while. To him the acquisition of almost all available knowledge seemed necessary in order to prepare for the criticism and elucidation of his chosen authors." Yet "his tendency as an author was to defer the publication of a formal volume." In short, he laboured intensely, but with no immediate object beyond that of intellectual identification

[1] *Walter Headlam : His Letters and Poems, with a Memoir.* By Cecil Headlam, 1910.

with the subjects which he loved. In a curious mood of self-censure he wrote thus to a friend whose letters he had neglected: "It isn't that I forget my friends; but the Scholar's danger of his work becoming too imperious, claiming all his time before any form of writing at any rate. This is what Wordsworth meant when, describing Cambridge in his time, he spoke of seeing 'Learning its own bondslave.'"

Yet, in spite of this complete absorption in pursuits where not one man in a hundred—even among educated people—could follow him, Walter Headlam was neither pedant nor prig. He had no affinity to the race of Dryasdust. If, granted a speciality in learning, one can specialize in it still further, Headlam's "special speciality" was the genius of Greek Lyrical Metres. Besides being a Scholar, he was a poet, and still more markedly a musician; and his application of musical tests to the written words of Greek Lyricists was a lantern for his steps, which made dark places seem clear and rough places plain, and enabled him, as it were, to dance and sing while he threaded his way where unilluminated Scholars had laboured and lumbered. The most brilliant classic whom Cambridge has lately produced told me only the other day that he had never known what Greek Lyrics meant till Headlam sang fragments of Simonides and Sappho, accompanying himself on the piano, and wedding the words to traditional tunes of English folk-lore.

Some years ago the present Master of Trinity[1] thus

[1] Henry Montagu Butler.

excellently illustrated some of the qualifications for the Teacher's office:—

" Teachers ought to be examples to learners, in body as well as in mind and in character. They ought to be bright, and vigorous, and energetic. There ought to be an open-air look about them, the look of blue skies, and north-easters, and sea, and mountain, and heather, and flowers, and cricket-ground, and lawn-tennis—not the look of the study, and late hours, and the half-digested 'Epoch,' and the 'Outlines,' and the 'Analysis,' and the 'Abstract of the Analysis,' and—more ghastly still—the 'Skeleton.'"

Teaching, in the formal and technical sense, formed a very small part of Headlam's life; but, when he encountered younger people, whether boys or girls, who were eager to follow him into that Earthly Paradise of Greek culture where he was so uniquely at home, he delighted in the task of guiding them; and one cannot doubt that a great part of his attractiveness was due to his truly Greek love of life and form and clear skies and open air. " If I had not been a Grecian," he used to say, " I should have been a Cricket 'Pro.' Cricket, music, Greek poetry, and hunting are the things that I care for." A friend who shared his rides and walks at Cambridge says: " You went through the Fellows' Gardens, where he would stop to look at the double white cherry-tree, 'the whitest white in Nature.'" He delighted to ride down a certain bridle-path that had tall hedges on either side, thick with a tangle of wild roses. " Heaven was a flowery meadow: the Greeks said so, and they ought to know." He was

a fearless rider to hounds, but rode, it must be admitted, erratically. "On more than one occasion, when his companions took a turn to left or right, Headlam, lost in the delight of swift motion, would hold on his way like an arrow from the bow, be seen in the distance still going hard, and seen no more that day."

Walter Headlam died suddenly in his forty-third year. If this chapter had been intended for a review of his Life, it might have been necessary to discuss, in an ethical or even a religious light, the best use of time and intellectual gifts; but my purpose has been quite impersonal. I have only cited a rare and recent instance of a type which the competitive rush of modern life will soon have utterly abolished.

TWELFTH NIGHT

TWELFTH NIGHT

On the 6th of January 1662 that indefatigable play-goer Mr. Pepys recorded in his Diary: "After dinner to the Duke's House, and there saw *Twelfth Night* acted well, though it be but a silly play and not related at all to the name." The final court of literary appeal—the general consent of the Cultivated Caste in modern Europe—has not confirmed Pepys' sentence on the "silly play"; but when he speaks of it as "not related at all to the name" he makes a palpable hit, or at least indicates a lost opportunity. John Downes, writing a century after the play was composed, says that "it was got up on purpose to be acted on Twelfth Night." And this fact, if fact it be, only makes it more tantalizing that the plot, the action, and the characters should bear no relation to the title. Shakespeare is Catholic as the sea is salt. Did not the very word "Catholicism" suggest to Matthew Arnold's mind "the pell-mell of all the men and women of Shakespeare's plays"? Shakespeare painted the daily life of a rich and free humanity, with the Mass, and all that the Mass represents, for its sun and centre. It is a permissible exercise of literary fancy to imagine the delightful combination of love and frolic and festivity which he might have woven round the traditional observance of Twelfth Night, when in Baron's Hall and minstrel-gallery,

the mirth of Christmas reached its topmost and final note, but not till, in the Mass of the Epiphany, men had once again paid their homage to the story of the Star. *Vidimus stellam Ejus in oriente, et venimus adorare Eum.*

But it is idle to speculate on what Shakespeare might have done. What he actually did had in it enough of "wonder and astonishment" to satisfy John Milton, and what satisfied Milton may well suffice for our less heroic age. Only the title—*Twelfth Night*—haunts and tantalizes us, and sets us dreaming of the immortal music in which Shakespeare, had he so willed, might have told us the story and the meaning of the Star.

A poet who lived three hundred years later, when he felt himself to be passing away into the grey mists, had one message, and one only, for the younger minstrels who would take up the task when he laid it down. Round him these young mariners were pressing, who would carry on his adventures, and would sail the seas that had once been his. And to them his farewell word, wrung out of all his long experience, and now charged with the solemn emphasis of the visionary judgment which comes with death, is this only: "Follow The Gleam!" Follow "the light that never was on sea or land." Follow the quest that is never fulfilled. Follow the Gleam beyond the ocean-margin, and beyond the confines of the world. There is a light which flashes and is gone, and yet survives. There is a light which eludes, but never deceives. There is a light which guides as it flies. There is a light which comes only

to those who seek in the night, and can feel after what they cannot find, and can still nurse "the unconquerable hope," and can never lose heart. There is a light which is for ever in motion, and can be retained only by moving with it. There is a light which is always just ahead of where you stand. You must follow, if you would arrive, and the following must never cease. "I am Merlin, who followed The Gleam." The seer's whole character, his whole secret, lies in that, from the first days when

> "In early summers,
> Over the mountains,
> On human faces,
> And all around me,
> Moving to melody,
> Floated The Gleam."

Down to the end, when

> "I can no longer,
> But die rejoicing;
> For there on the borders
> Of boundless ocean,
> And all but in Heaven,
> Hovers The Gleam."

Therefore:

> "O young mariner,
> Call your companions,
> Launch your vessel,
> And crowd your canvas;
> And ere it vanishes
> Over the margin,
> After it, follow it—
> Follow The Gleam."

This was Merlin's charge; and the Message of Epiphany—the story of the Star—repeats it under changed conditions. Those Wise Men from the mysterious East just "followed The Gleam" that

broke in upon their patient studies. They could know nothing of the perils and perplexities which lay before them on their long desert-journey; nothing of the place and the circumstances in which they would find the Object of their quest; nothing of the martyrdom which, according to immemorial tradition, awaited their return and crowned their course. All they knew was that the Star had summoned them to a high and difficult enterprise, and whither The Gleam led, there they must follow.

Follow the Gleam. Surely it is the golden motto of adventurous youth, peering into the misty future to see the line of its course through life; the heights to be scaled, the abysses to be avoided. "Follow The Gleam" just where it leads. Cast doubt and fear and misgiving on one side. Press forward with your eyes upon the Star, and when the Star stops, but not till then, you will have found the object of your quest.

"Follow the Gleam." Again, and again, not in poetry or romance, but in the solid truth of human history, the Star, seen first in early youth, has guided the man to the haven of his completed ministry and his predestined perfection. St. Benedict was at the age of an English Public School-boy when he fled to his cave, and by sharp austerities prepared himself to be the founder of the most permanent society in Europe. St. Francis was only a youth when the words—"Take up thy cross and follow Me" —burnt themselves into his soul and sealed him to a life of sacrifice. Lord Shaftesbury was a boy at Harrow when, horrified by a scene of indecency

and drunkenness at a pauper's funeral, he devoted his life to the service of the poor. Gladstone had only just entered on man's estate when he pledged himself before God to put first among the objects of his ambition the rescue of the fallen. All these followed the Gleam, from the hour when it first flashed upon their "inward eye," till the journey was accomplished and the quest was won.

After such heroic examples of devotion to high ends, it may seem a bathos even to recall the pursuit which, according to Bacon, is of all others the most immersed in matter. Yet even the life of Politics has its ambitions and its inspirations, its guiding stars and its visionary gleams; and they to whom in early youth our Lady of Freedom has revealed the divine beauty of her face will be found fighting her battles when their hairs are grey. One need not be a Scotsman to feel one's heart beat quicker when Sandy Mackaye on his deathbed sends to his fellow-workers for the Charter the dying counsels of "ane o' four-score years and mair—ane that has grawn grey in the People's Cause—that sate at the feet o' Cartwright, an' knelt by the deathbed o' Rabbie Burns—ane that cheerit Burdett as he went to the Tower, an' spent his wee earnings for Hunt an' Cobbett—ane that beheld the shaking o' the nations in the Ninety-three, and heard the birth-shriek o' a new-born world—ane that while he was yet a callant saw Liberty afar off, an' seeing her was glad, an' followed her through the wilderness for three-score weary, waeful years."

Yes. "Follow The Gleam." It may lead you

into unpopularity and contempt, the scorn of the vulgar, and the world's disesteem; even, perhaps, to definite hardship, and the loss of much that makes life sweet and smooth. But "Follow The Gleam." It is worth all the struggles and the sorrows, even though they were agonies, through which it leads you; for when at length the Star stops, and by stopping tells you that your work is done, you will know that you have not "been disobedient unto the heavenly vision," nor closed your ears to the voice which spoke to you from on high.

> "Is not this reward enough—
> To have helped to smooth the rough,
> To have made the toilsome way a little clear;
> To have fallen in the van,
> Though but one forgotten man,
> Of the army that is bringing the New Year?"

Such thoughts as these, though suggested in the first instance by the ecclesiastical season, are not, I think, inappropriate to the civil struggle on which all England is just entering.[1] If the worshippers of Liberty will "follow the Gleam," it will guide them through the quicksands and morasses which beset their way more surely than all the constitutional treatises and fiscal pamphlets that ever were written. And to my younger brothers in the great family of Liberalism, more emphatically than to any other class of readers, I say: "Follow The Gleam," and follow it so whole-heartedly that, when you look back upon the crisis of 1910, the memory of the fashion in which you then played

[1] The General Election, January 1910.

your part may animate your maturer age with the enthusiasm of your prime.

P.S.—If any one should accuse me of having in part of this chapter plagiarised from my friend Henry Scott Holland, I welcome the accusation; and I exhort my readers to make themselves acquainted with Sermon III. in a book called *Vital Values*. It is certainly one of the most inspiring utterances that I ever heard or read.

THE IMPREGNABLE ROCK

THE IMPREGNABLE ROCK

In writing about the Tercentenary of the Authorized Version,[1] I am obeying a request from Edinburgh; and, by a natural association of ideas, I borrow my title from an illustrious Scotsman. In the preface to *The Impregnable Rock of Holy Scripture*, published in 1890, Mr. Gladstone thus justified the words which he had chosen for his title:

"They lead upwards and onwards to the idea that the Scriptures, though assailed by camp, by battery, and by mine, are still nevertheless a house builded upon a rock, and that rock impregnable; . . . that the weapon of offence, which shall impair their efficiency for aiding in the redemption of mankind, has not yet been forged; and that the Sacred Canon, which it took (perhaps) two thousand years, from the accumulations of Moses down to the acceptance of the Apocalypse, to construct, is like to wear out the storms and the sunshine of the world, and all the wayward aberrations of humanity, not merely for a term as long, but until time shall be no more."

If I were writing a treatise instead of an article, I should pause on "The Sacred Canon," and the length of time which elapsed before it was completed. I should point out that the Bible is not a single book, but a collection of books, written by people of

[1] 1911.

different races, languages, and degrees of religious development, in countries widely separated, and at dates far distant from each other. I should point out that there was a Church before there was a Bible, and that the function of deciding which books should be and which should not be finally included in the Canon was the work of the Church—*i.e.* of the enlightened mind of the Christian community. But I am confined within limits too narrow to permit this method of procedure, and I must confine myself to the Bible as it actually exists; and, for ninety-nine Englishmen out of a hundred, this means the English version dedicated to King James I. "The Authorized Version," as we commonly call it, though the method of the authorization is not clear, has been for these three centuries the standard of English prose. It used to be said that John Bright was the only man who could quote the Bible in the House of Commons without creating a sense of incongruity; and this was at once a tribute to his character and to his style. The gravity of his life cleared the quotation from any suspicion of irreverence or flippancy: the purity of his own style made a fit and natural setting for the quoted words. Our English Bible is of course in some sense a product of the Renaissance, for it was only the revival of learning in the Western world which made translation possible; and the fact that men, working with an apparatus of scholarship so limited, should have produced a version so near in sense to the originals, is an intellectual miracle. Of course every one has felt from his childhood that the New Testament is easier to understand than the Old;

and at school we learned that the difference in intelligibility depended on the greater or less accuracy of translation, and that the language of the New Testament was nearer the original than that of the Old Testament. Certainly the mistranslations in the Old Testament sometimes obscured the meaning; it was hardly ever so in the New. Yet by degrees the experts in Biblical scholarship began to hanker for a more exact rendering of both Testaments.

It was by no means a popular demand,—for the great mass of people were content to be edified by what they understood and to leave what was unintelligible on one side. But the question made its way into Parliament; and then Convocation, fearing that the State might take the work into its own hands, recommended a revision of the Authorized Version. A Company of scholars was formed for the purpose, and sat from 1870 to 1884. The Revised Version of the New Testament was issued in 1881; that of the Old Testament in 1884. The principles on which the Revisers acted in the successive stages of their work are set forth in the prefaces to these two versions. The head and front of the Revision was Dr. Ellicott, Bishop of Gloucester and Bristol; and towards the end of his days I had an interesting talk with him about his experiences. He was well past eighty, but was still hard at work on the Greek Testament, and was as keen as a boy about what had been the occupation of his life. "I suppose," he said, "that when you read the Revised Version of the New Testament you think you are reading Westcott? Quite a mistake.

Westcott would spend hours in balancing the *pros* and *cons* of this reading or that version, and then, when we were forced to settle it by dividing, Westcott would retreat into a corner of the room and refuse to vote."

When the Revision of 1881 appeared it was discovered, by some with chagrin and by others with relief, that the doctrinal significance of the New Testament had scarcely been affected. Of course the text of the Heavenly Recorders went out; but it had long been known to be a pious fraud, and its loss was more than balanced by the amended version of Titus ii. 13. A better understanding of the significance of Greek tenses wiped off the stain of Predestinarianism from Acts ii. 47. The minute change from *and* to *or* in 1st Cor. xi. 27 gave Scriptural authority to the Roman doctrine of Concomitance. In a good many passages the meaning was made clearer, and some small misleadings, such as " Jesus " for " Joshua " in Romans iv. 8, and " robbery " for " prize " in Phil. ii. 6, were set right. But, broadly speaking, the New Testament remained, as regards its meaning, what it had been before.

As regards its meaning, I say, for in point of language the change was disastrous. The Revisers knew a great deal of Greek, but they knew uncommonly little English. The method of voting on this word or that did not conduce to perfection of style; and the Revision, as soon as it appeared, made it clear to all who read dispassionately that, whatever else had assisted at its birth, the sense of literary beauty had been conspicuously absent.

The Impregnable Rock

The first attack on the Revised New Testament was made by J. W. Burgon, Dean of Chichester, in a pungent treatise called "The Revision Revised," and the Dean secured an unexpected ally in Matthew Arnold. Founding himself on Goethe's theory that "the beautiful is a manifestation of secret laws of nature, which, but for its apparition, would have for ever remained hidden from us," Arnold impeached the literary sense of the Revisers in some persuasive passages which may be here condensed. He spoke, not of the "Authorized," but more aptly of the "Established," Version, and of this he said:

"It comes to us from an age of singular power, and has great beauty. This beauty is a source of great power. Use and wont have further added to the power of this beauty by attaching to the old version a thousand sentiments and associations. Altogether a force of the utmost magnitude has come into being. The Revisers seem to have been insufficiently aware either of the nature of this force or of its importance and value. They too much proceeded either as if they had the recipe, if they broke up the force of beauty and sentiment attaching to the old version, for producing this force afresh themselves, or else as if the force was a matter of no great importance. In either case they are mistaken. The beauty of the old version is 'a manifestation of *secret* laws of nature,' and neither the Revisers, nor any of us, can be sure of finding the recipe, if we destroy this manifestation, for compounding another as good. And, if we think that its beauty does not much

matter, then we have nature against us, for a manifestation of beauty is a manifestation of laws of *nature.*"

Then, turning to Burgon's criticism, Arnold praises him for having chosen a "Test-passage" by which the literary merits of the old and the new version can be suitably compared. We are to take three verses from the Second Epistle of St. Peter as they stand in the old version:

"And beside this, giving all diligence, add to your faith, virtue; and to virtue, knowledge; and to knowledge, temperance; and to temperance, patience; and to patience, godliness; and to godliness, brotherly kindness; and to brotherly kindness, charity."

Against this, says Arnold, let us set the work of the Revisers:

"Yea, and for this very cause adding on your part all diligence, in your faith supply virtue; and in your virtue knowledge; and in your knowledge temperance; and in your temperance patience; and in your patience godliness; and in your godliness love of the brethren; and in your love of the brethren love."

By merely placing these versions side by side, said Arnold, we have done enough to condemn the Revised Version as a substitute for the old version. We see, by a startling example, how it has not the power of beauty and sentiment attaching to the old version, and can never have it. The instinct of self-preservation in humanity will make us retain the old version, which has this power. "If by an

act of authority the new version could be made to supersede the old, and the old to go out of use, a blow would be struck at Religion in this country far more dangerous than the hindrances with which it has to contend now—Beer-shops, Dissent, Ritualism, the Salvation Army, and the rest of the long and sad list. The new enemy would be indifference; an ever-growing indifference to a New Testament which failed to delight and move men like the old and to fix its phrases in their memory."

I have put these words in inverted commas because I do not wish to be responsible for that curious list of the hindrances to Religion; but in the literary judgment I entirely concur. The Revisers were led away by a very natural desire to correct all mistakes of the old version, and to make a version which should be perfectly accurate. When once one is engaged, indeed, in a task like that of the Revisers, the desire to alter is sure to grow upon one as one proceeds, until at last one is capable of forgetting that even "the aorist was made for man, and not man for the aorist," and of waging against the past tenses of the old version an often pedantic war. To have fallen into this course of proceeding is so natural that we must by no means make it a matter of reproach against the Revisers; but it remains none the less true that, only by resisting the impulse to alter, by never forgetting that the object in view was not to make a perfectly accurate translation, but to preserve unimpaired the force of beauty and sentiment residing in the old version, at the same time that one made such corrections as were indeed necessary—

only by submitting to these conditions was real success possible to the Revisers.

As it is, they produced a work excellently fitted to help and instruct in reading the New Testament all who do not know Greek—a work which in this way is of invaluable usefulness, and from which every reader probably imports, for his own use, into his New Testament such corrections as seem to him urgently needed. But they did not do that which they were meant to do: they did not give us a version which is just the old version improved and which can take the place of it. " In fact, a second company of Revisers is now needed to go through the recent Revision, and to decide what of it ought to be imported into the Established Version and with what modifications."

In the foregoing chapter I have quoted the more freely from Matthew Arnold, because his strictures on the Revised Version, originally published in a Review, were not reprinted.

THE DIVINE LIBRARY

THE DIVINE LIBRARY

An occasion so notable as the three hundredth anniversary of the English Bible may justify a second paper on the same subject. Having spoken of the "Authorized Version," and of the Revisers' attempt to amend it, I should like to say a word about the Bible in daily life, and about the uses to which we put it.

My heading is chosen in order to enforce the fact that the Bible is not one book, but a collection of books, and the variousness of its contents cannot be better conveyed than by a passage from Mr. J. R. Green. At the Reformation, he says, understanding by that phrase a considerable stretch of time—

"The people were leavened with a new literature. Legends and annals, war-songs and psalms, state-rolls and biographies, the mighty voices of prophets, the parables of evangelists, stories of mission-journeys, of perils by the sea and among the heathen, philosophic arguments, apocalyptic visions — all were flung broadcast over minds unoccupied for the most part by any rival learning. As a mere literary monument, the English version of the Bible remains the noblest example of the English tongue. The power of the book over the mass of Englishmen showed itself in a thousand ways, and in none more conspicuously than in the influence which it exerted on ordinary speech. It formed the whole literature

which was practically accessible to ordinary Englishmen; and when we recall the number of common phrases which we owe to great authors—the bits of Shakespeare, or Milton, or Dickens, or Thackeray which unconsciously interweave themselves in our ordinary talk—we shall better understand the strange mosaic of Biblical words and phrases which coloured English talk three hundred years ago."

That "strange mosaic," or at any rate some fragments of it, have survived into our own time. I myself have been rebuked for quoting phrases from the Bible in ordinary discourse. I have consistently replied that the rightness or wrongness of Biblical quotation depends partly on the nature of the passage quoted and partly on the spirit of the quoter. A quotation suggested by flippancy, or irreverence, or the desire to offend is an outrage on decency; and there are passages of the Bible which deal with events so solemn, or emotions so sacred, that no right-minded person would dream of severing them from their context. But other parts of the Bible seem to have been written for the express purpose of quotation. The practice of the New Testament sanctions citation from the Old. Apt phrases from Proverbs and Ecclesiastes have permanently embedded themselves in the common speech of mankind, and there is scarcely one of the Parables which has not made its addition to the common stock.

In the passage which I have quoted Green referred to the influence of the Bible on "ordinary speech." Its influence on religious speech was even more distinct, and is free from all reproach of profanity or

bad taste. Every one who knows his Bible with even moderate intimacy must be struck by its unpremeditated aptness to the passing circumstances of his own life. We are not, as a rule, sufficiently methodical to record the instances as they occur; but, if we were, we probably could fill our note-books with such entries as these—

"On most occasions of very sharp pressure or trial, some word of Scripture has come home to me as if borne on angels' wings. Many could I recollect. In the winter of 1837, Psalm 128. This came in a most singular manner, but it would be a long story to tell. In the Oxford contest of 1847 (which was very harrowing) the verse 'O Lord God, Thou strength of my health, Thou hast covered my head in the day of battle.' In the Gorham contest, after the Judgment—'And though all this be come upon us, yet do we not forget Thee. No, not when Thou hast smitten us into the place of dragons.' On the 17th April, 1853 (my first Budget speech), it was—'Give Thy strength unto Thy servant, and help the son of Thine handmaid.' In the Crimean War Budget, it was—'Thou shalt prepare a table before me against them that trouble me.'"

The reader will have guessed, before he reaches the end of this citation, that it is from Mr. Gladstone's Diary, and similar passages might be culled in great abundance. When reviewing the circumstances which had led him to his crowning triumph of 1880, he counted among them "the remarkable manner in which Holy Scripture has been applied to me for admonition and comfort." "The Psalms," he said,

"are the great storehouse"; and this testimony, founded on long and intimate acquaintance, heavily outweighs the theories of exterior critics (like Bunsen) who have condemned the daily recitation of the Psalter in Divine Worship as indiscriminate and absurd. Sir Henry Lunn, in his most interesting appeal (just published) to his brother-Methodists, says of the great John Wesley that "he ever put in the foreground of all forms of prayer, of all liturgies, the Book of Psalms, the liturgy of the Jewish Church"; and he adds, with perfect truth, "From this treasure-house of adoration, confession, and intercession the Christian Church in every age and in all its communions has received much of its highest inspiration."

Of course all that I have said about quotation applies only to people who really know their Bibles. We cannot quote what we do not remember; and the heart does not utter itself in half-familiar phraseology. When a man bursts into a religious or educational discussion with the truculent boast, "Well, my religion is the Bible," it is an interesting experiment to test his Biblical attainments. You need not trouble yourself about the Old Testament, for except some confused reminiscences of Genesis, no fragments of it have remained in his mind; and even when you come to the New, he will be dumfounded if you ask him to state the argument of one of St. Paul's Epistles, or to trace the beginnings of ecclesiastical order as recorded in the Acts. If he is a very sturdy Protestant, he may think that he remembers something about the Church of Rome in the Book of

Revelation; but he will certainly be stumped if you require him to give the Scriptural arguments for and against the Petrine claims. An unbounded belief in the Bible may coexist with a profound ignorance of its contents.

That ignorance not seldom takes the form of an unwarranted inclusiveness. These believers in "the Bible and the Bible only" imagine that all sorts of secular sayings are Biblical. They may not know Solomon's opinion of too-frequent visitors, or who it was that first escaped by the skin of his teeth, or what Job thought of the white of an egg; but they are persuaded that "In the midst of life we are in death" and "He tempers the wind to the shorn lamb" are Canonical Scripture. In my youth there was a pathetic song about the insupportability of bereavement:

> "Had we ne'er heard that Scripture word,
> 'Not lost, but gone before,'"

and those who applauded the music did not ask for the reference.

Dickens invented, in *Dombey and Son*, a "First Epistle of St. Paul to the Ephesians," and I have just read a passing allusion to "the fraternal feud between Joseph and Esau." In a letter which lies before me as I write, I see—"God's Holy Word tells us that silence is golden, which is true." True, perhaps, but not Scriptural.

He. "How old is it? Well, I can only say that the memory of man runneth not to the contrary."

She. "There you go again! though you know how I dislike hearing the Bible quoted jocosely."

If I am seen to hold in scant respect this combination of reverence for the Bible with ignorance of its contents, let me hasten to suggest a way of remedying the anomaly. That way is, not to abandon the reverence, but to correct the ignorance—to honour the Bible as a Golden Treasury of wisdom and beauty, and to make our worship of it intelligent as well as devout. After all, St. John is quite as interesting as Plato, and St. Paul's letters are better worth reading than Cicero's. The Divine Library contains abundant provision for the intellect as well as for the soul of man, and he who knows it best, best knows its power.

"Heaven and earth shall pass away, but My words shall not pass away." As they have lived and wrought, so they will live and work. From the teacher's chair, and from the pastor's pulpit; in the humblest hymn that ever mounted to the ear of God from beneath a cottage roof, and in the rich, melodious choir of the noblest cathedral, "their sound is gone out into all lands, and their words into the ends of the world." Nor here alone, but in a thousand silent and unsuspected forms will they unweariedly prosecute their holy office. Who doubts that, times without number, particular portions of Scripture find their way to the human soul as if embassies from on high, each with its own commission of comfort, of guidance, or of warning? What crisis, what trouble, what perplexity of life has failed or can fail to draw from this inexhaustible treasure-house its proper supply? What profession, what position is not daily and hourly enriched by these words

which repetition never weakens, which carry with them now, as in the days of their first utterance, the freshness of youth and immortality? When the solitary student opens all his heart to drink them in, they will reward his toil. And in forms yet more hidden and withdrawn—in the retirement of the chamber, in the stillness of the night-season, upon a bed of sickness, and in the face of death—the Bible will be there, its several words how often winged with their several and special messages to heal and to soothe, to uplift and to uphold, to invigorate and stir! Nay, more, perhaps, than this; amid the crowds of the court, or the forum, or the street, or the market-place, when every thought of every soul seems to be set upon the excitements of ambition, or of business, or of pleasure, there, too, even there, the still small voice of the Holy Bible will be heard, and the soul, aided by some blessed word, may find wings like a dove, may flee away, and be at rest.—(W. E. Gladstone.)

GILBERT ON THE WHITE HORSE

GILBERT ON THE WHITE HORSE[1]

"THE Gilbertines were an order of Canons and Nuns established at Sempringham in Lincolnshire, by Gilbert of that place—in 1131. At the Dissolution there were 25 houses of the Order in England and Wales." I quote from the Ecclesiastical Dictionary of the learned Dr. Dryasdust, but my copy is out of date. When a fresh edition appears, it will certainly refer to a revival of the Order, *circ.* 1900, originating, not at Sempringham, but in London, where "Gilbert of that place" gathered round him a company of loving disciples. This Order spread to a great many more than "25 houses in England and Wales"; and presently its centre shifted from London to Beaconsfield, but the genial Re-founder remained unchanged by change of environment. One of his disciples, finding prose all powerless to express his devotion, declared that this second Gilbert was:

> "The sweetest thing that ever grew
> Beside a cottage door";

and it was universally admitted that the author of the Sonnet beginning:

> "Stilton, thou should'st be living at this hour,
> And so thou art. Nor losest grace thereby;
> England has need of thee, and so have I—
> She is a Fen. Far as the eye can scour,

[1] *Ballad of the White Horse.* By G. K. Chesterton.

League after grassy league, from Lincoln Tower
To Stilton in the fields, she is a Fen,
Yet this high cheese, by choice of fenland men,
Like a tall free volcano rose in power.

Plain living and long drinking are no more;
And pure religion reading 'Household Words,'
And sturdy manhood sitting still all day,
Shrink, like their cheese that crumbles to its core;
While by digestion, like the House of Lords,
The heaviest burdens on herself doth lay,"

was of the lineage of Wordsworth.

But historical analogies should not be unduly pressed, nor parables indefinitely extended. Let me say then, quite plainly, that Mr. Gilbert Keith Chesterton, a son of the soil of London, who knows its many-coloured life and has described it enchantingly in prose and verse, has of late betaken himself to pastures new and fresh inspirations. In the first chapter of *Tom Brown* (which is worth all the rest put together) we were taught when we were young to love the Vale of the White Horse, with its glorious legends of Ashdown, where Alfred broke the Danish power, and made England a Christian land. "After which crowning mercy, the pious King, that there might never be wanting a sign and a memorial to the country-side, carved out on the northern side of the chalk hill the great Saxon White Horse, that gives its name to the Vale, over which it has looked these thousand years or more."

Mr. Chesterton, having deserted London and quartered himself at Beaconsfield, has taken up his pilgrim-staff, and made his way through the beech-clad recesses of the Chilterns, past the spires of Oxford, to the steep slopes of those Berkshire downs,

where men still cherish the story of Alfred with his Cakes and his Harp and his conquering Sword. It is in vain for Dryasdust to suggest inglorious doubts: Mr. Chesterton brushes him aside with appropriate contempt. "I do not know when or where the story started; it is enough that it started somewhere and ended with me; for I only seek to write upon hearsay, as the old balladists did." If hearsay were always as good as this, we should want no history. Mr. Chesterton has taken the tale of Alfred, "fighting for the Christian civilization against the heathen nihilism," and has woven it into a ballad worthy of the name. A curiously inept critic has suggested that "Mr. Chesterton ought to have been a Troubadour"; but light, fantastic prettiness and love-making, poised on one toe and playing a guitar, are not the characteristics of Mr. Chesterton's ballad. It is a song of fighting; of impassioned yet disciplined strength; of deep humility and self-mistrust, and of victorious faith.

The verbal medium through which this is conveyed shows afresh the writer's command over the illimitably rich resources of our English speech; the glowing, apt, "inevitable" words, which all the time are lying ready to be used, but which most of us are too unskilful to discover. As to form, well, the very idea of a ballad justifies irregularity, and may condone some unwelcome reminiscences of Macaulay's *Lays*, and here and there a rhyme which is true only to the eye.

Mr. Chesterton rides his metre as one rides an impetuous horse. As we gallop along by his side, we

feel the brisk air of the Downs stinging our faces, and the short turf is soft under our feet; and the horses catch the freshness of the hill-tops, and strain between our knees, and every now and then take a strong pull on the bridle, and unless we can take a stronger pull, will inevitably bolt. But then comes in Mr. Chesterton's horsemanship. His mount is as fresh as a four-year old, and pulls in sheer exuberance—but does not bolt. In other words, he is master of his metre.

In Book I. King Alfred, who has fallen on evil times, seeks comfort, in a vision, from the Mother of God:

> " ' When our last bow is broken, Queen,
> And our last javelin cast,
> Under some sad, green, evening sky,
> Holding a ruined cross on high,
> Under warm westland grass to lie,
> Shall we come home at last? ' "

And the reply is not what he desired.

> " ' I tell you naught for your comfort,
> Yea, naught for your desire,
> Save that the sky grows darker yet,
> And the sea rises higher.' "

That verse might serve as an epitome of the whole ballad.

In Book II. Alfred, who has heard in the Voice of the Vision a call to arms, sets out to collect his forces for a more desperate encounter.

> " ' I am that oft-defeated King,
> Whose failure fills the land,
> Who fled before the Danes of old,
> Who chaffered with the Danes for gold,
> Who now upon the Wessex wold
> Hardly has feet to stand.' "

Yet, inspired by what the Blessed Mother has told him, he summons all true hearts to his side.

" ' For I go gathering Christian men
From sunken paving and ford and fen,
To die in a battle, God knows when,
By God, but I know why.' "

And one of the chiefs makes answer:

" ' Where would you meet? For you must hold
Half Wiltshire and the White Horse wold,
And the Thames bank to Owsenfold
If Wessex goes to war! '

" ' If each man on the Judgment Day
Meet God on a plain alone,'
Said Alfred, ' I will speak for you
As for myself, and call it true
That you brought all fighting folk you knew
Lined under Egbert's Stone.' "

Book III. discovers Alfred a wandering pilgrim, with an old harp on his arm. The heathen are in the land, and all around are the signs of their habitation.

" The fires of the Great Army
That was made of iron men,
Whose lights of sacrilege and scorn
Ran around England red as morn,
Fires over Glastonbury Thorn—
Fires out on Ely Fen.

. . . . . .

" King Alfred gazed all sorrowful
At thistle and mosses grey,
Till a rally of Danes with shield and bill
Rolled drunk over the dome of the hill,
And, hearing of his harp and skill,
Men dragged him to their play."

And there they sate carousing, and singing their heathenish songs of slaughter and lust and the spoils of conquest.

" Great wine like blood from Burgundy,
Cloaks like the clouds from Tyre,
And marble like solid moonlight,
And gold like frozen fire.

Smells that a man might swill in a cup,
Stones that a man might eat,
And the great smooth women, like ivory,
That the Turks sell in the street."

And then, on all this debauch of insolent animalism, falls the warning word of the unknown King.

" ' Sirs, I am but a nameless man,
A rhymester without home,
Yet, since I come of the Wessex clay
And carry the Cross of Rome,

I will even answer the mighty earl
That asked of Wessex men
Why they be meek and monkish folk,
And bow to the White Lord's broken yoke;
Here is my answer then.

That on you is fallen the shadow,
And not upon the Name;
That though we scatter and though we fly,
And you hang over us like the sky,
You are more tired of victory,
Than we are tired of shame.

That though you hunt the Christian man
Like a hare on the hill-side,
The hare has still more heart to run,
Than you have heart to ride.' "

Book IV. presents the long-loved tale of Alfred and the Cakes—" disputed," says Mr. Chesterton, " by grave historians, who were, I think, a little too grave to be judges of it." So here is Alfred in the hut:

" Bright-eyed, but lean and pale;
And swordless, with his harp and rags,
He seemed a beggar, such as lags
Looking for crusts and ale."

And the woman pitied his poor plight, and bade him mind the cakes, and promised one for his reward; and he fell to meditating on the miseries of

servitude, and wished the woman a happier portion —and so:

> " The good food fell upon the ash,
> And blackened instantly."

And then the punishment:

> " Screaming, the woman caught a cake
> Yet burning from the bar,
> And struck him suddenly on the face,
> Leaving a scarlet scar."

And for one moment the torture awoke the demon of offended pride; but strong self-mastery beat him down. The woman who struck the blow shall go scot-free, and the insult shall ennoble while it stings.

> " ' He that hath failed in a little thing
> Hath a sign upon the brow;
> And the Earls of the Great Army
> Have no such seal to show.
> This blow that I return not
> Ten times will I return
> On Kings and Earls of all degree,
> And armies wide as empires be
> Shall slide like landslips to the sea,
> If the red star burn.' "

Books V., VI., and VII. give the ballad of Ethandune:

> " Then Alfred, King of England,
> Bade blow the horns of war,
> And fling the Golden Dragon out,
> With crackle and acclaim and shout,
> Scrolled and aflame and far."

And in Book VIII. we read the conclusion of the tale, and withal its interpretation:

> " In the days of the rest of Alfred,
> When all these things were done,
> And Wessex lay in a patch of peace,
> Like a dog in a patch of sun—

The King sat in his orchard,
Among apples green and red,
With the little book in his bosom,
And the sunshine on his head."

And there he held his Court, and gave the law, and ruled with the strong hand, and punished the wrong-doer, and let his almsgiving flow like a river in flood; and bore himself in all things as a high Christian King. And, when he began to draw towards his end, he bade his followers keep the Great White Horse scoured and clean, as an everlasting memorial of the great victory of Light over Darkness. Yet, even as he uttered his command, the shadow of a doubt fell upon his soul, and he remembered the Virgin Mother's prophecy that the skies would darken once again for a perilous storm; and he foresaw that the white symbol would grow dim, and that the once-conquered enemy would lift his hated head once more.

"I know that weeds shall grow in it
Faster than men can burn;
And, though they scatter now and go,
In some far century, sad and slow,
I have a vision, and I know
The heathen shall return.
. . . . . .

They shall come mild as monkish clerks,
With many a scroll and pen;
And backward shall ye turn and gaze,
Desiring one of Alfred's days,
When pagans still were men.

By this sign ye shall know them,
The breaking of the sword,
And Man no more a free knight,
That loves or hates his lord.

Yea, this shall be the sign of them,
The sign of the dying fire;
And Man made like a half-wit,
That knows not of his sire.

Gilbert on the White Horse

What though they come with scroll and pen,
And grave as a shaven clerk,
By this sign you shall know them,
That they ruin and make dark;

By all men bond to Nothing,
Being slaves without a lord,
By one blind idiot-world obeyed,
Too blind to be abhorred.

By terror and the cruel tales
Of curse in bone and kin,
By detail of the sinning,
And denial of the sin;

By thought a crawling ruin,
By life a leaping mire,
By a broken heart in the breast of the world,
And the end of the world's desire;

By God and man dishonoured,
By death and life made vain,
Know ye the old barbarian,
The barbarian come again."

There is Mr. Chesterton's true message to the age. He sees what our authorized teachers of Religion either fail to see, or, seeing, prefer to ignore. He sees that, masking their true natures under a parade of pseudo-science, "the heathen have come into the inheritance" of Christendom. He detects in their jargon of "lesser breeds," and the rights of "the Blood," and "the survival of the fittest," and the supremacy of brute force, the negation of the Christian Ethic and the dethronement of the Christian Ideal. He sees that the Offence of the Cross has not ceased; that there is no discharge in the war to which the followers of the Cross are pledged; and that the eternal duty of the Church is not to court or caress, but to fight and to conquer, the "obscene empires of Mammon and Belial."

CARDINAL NEWMAN

CARDINAL NEWMAN

"EXHAUSTIVE" and "monumental" are the consecrated epithets for books of this type [1]—books of great bulk, containing an immense amount of matter carefully arranged, and including within their scope everything in heaven and earth which can illustrate their theme. It is whispered that, in addition to all public records collated in England and on the Continent, Mr. Ward has read 50,000 letters—

"A thing imagination boggles at."

But he has his reward. Here at last is the story, never henceforth to be denied or gainsaid, of the Man to whom, more than to any other one person, must be attributed both the "Second Spring" of the English Church and the present position of the Roman Church in England. Large as the book is, it would have been much larger, if Mr. Ward had retraced in detail the story of Newman's Anglican life; but he has wisely realized the fact that nothing can be advantageously added to, or subtracted from, the *Apologia*, and he has left that spiritual and literary masterpiece to tell its own tale. By the time we reach the 94th page of the first volume, Newman has been received into the Roman Church. Henceforward the Church of England disappears; and our concern is with Rome and Romanists and Romanism.

[1] *The Life of Cardinal Newman.* By Wilfrid Ward.

John Henry Newman was now in his forty-fifth year, at the height of his influence, and in the full perfection of his powers. Not often, surely, has Providence fashioned such an intellect—so piercing, so swift, so pliant, so subtle. The intellect expressed itself in the style—flexible and sinuous, yet sharply pointed, natural, easy, unforced, as a bird's song; clear as the thought which it expressed; simple as the Bible and Shakespeare are simple, and withal rich as they are rich. Life, light, colour, and movement are the notes of Newman's style; and, though he gave it later a more sumptuous turn, it was, at the moment of his secession, as near perfection as genius and care could make it. In that very year he wrote: "Perhaps one gets over-sensitive even about style as one gets on in life." "I have not written a sentence, I suppose which will stand, or hardly so." "Besides rewriting, every part has to be worked out and defined as in moulding a statue." As we read Newman, his style seems the easiest, most natural, most inevitable, in the world; and yet those extracts show that, even in the throes of the spiritual crisis which cut his life in half, he worked at his manuscript like a sculptor working at his clay.

The intellect and the style were enough to have made Newman famous; but they were joined in him with a keen sanctity "which the world cannot tame," and were used with sedulous care and the most consummate skill for the furtherance of one great end. "After hearing those sermons you might come away still not believing the tenets peculiar to the High Church system; but you would be harder than most

men, if you did not feel more than ever ashamed of coarseness, selfishness, worldliness; if you did not feel the things of faith brought closer to the soul." Genius and holiness together had made Newman master of the young and generous world which thronged round the pulpit of St. Mary's. As Mr. Ward says, " he exercised a kingship in Oxford, extending far beyond the ranks of a party, an influence so extraordinary that the tradition of it is now no longer realised and only half believed." The extent of that influence can never be measured. Some notion of its force may be gathered from the list of those who rose up and followed him without delay into the Roman fold. In his fall, as some esteemed it, he drew after him, as Mr. Gladstone said, " a third part of the stars of Heaven," and what we lost Rome gained. Surely, since her final breach with us in 1570, Rome had won no such convert as Newman. He had already dissipated ignorance concerning her, and allayed suspicion, and made her seem interesting and beautiful and attractive where before she had been abhorred and dreaded, or at best despised. Surely, if guided only by a human instinct, she must realize the magnitude of the boon which Newman brought her; must welcome him with open arms, and crown him with her choicest honours. That was the ideal. What really happened Mr. Ward tells us, and a sorry tale it is. The story of Newman's experience in the Church of Rome, from 1845 to 1879, is a story of disillusionments, rebuffs, frustrations, disappointments; a story of unjust suspicions and calculated insults, with here and there disagreeable symptoms of trea-

chery and double-dealing. When I write the word "disillusionments," I do not mean the gravest disillusion of all. His religious faith never failed nor wavered. He had deliberately accepted the religion of the Papacy with all that it involves; and faith in that religion carried him, if not serene, yet patient and dutiful, through all experiences of earthly sorrow. His "disillusionments" did not touch the Truth. They touched systems and methods and hopes and plans and efforts, and often they touched human characters, and saintly reputations which masked ambition and emulation and some worse faults. He had long believed that "to follow the lead of Rome was to prosper"; but that belief was now shattered by harsh realities. We may take them, very briefly, point by point:—

(1) In 1850 an ex-Dominican called Giacinto Achilli came to England and delivered a course of lectures against the Inquisition. Cardinal Wiseman, then the head of the Roman Church in England, replied by an article in the *Dublin Review*, in which he charged Achilli with shameful immoralities. Newman, in an evil moment, took Wiseman's allegations as facts, and repeated them, with emphasis, in a public lecture. Achilli prosecuted Newman for libel, and Newman naturally applied to Wiseman for his authorities; but Wiseman gave only half his mind to the business; looked for the documents, could not find them, or, as Newman thought, did not try to find them; and eventually found them when the trial was over, and Newman had been found guilty of libel, heavily fined, and publicly rebuked by the judge. It

was a disillusioning experience, and Newman, who never forgot anything, remembered it.

(2) In 1851 Newman was requested by the Hierarchy to undertake the formation of a Catholic University in Ireland, and to be its "Rector." The difficulties which surrounded the enterprise were many and immense, and Newman saw them all. But the Pope had given a special sanction to the scheme, and this fact made Newman look upon the request of the Bishops as a Divine call. Here was to be the work of his life. He was to be the means of spreading the highest education among the untaught, or half-taught, Catholics of Ireland, and was to show them that perfect harmony between, or rather identity of, Faith and Philosophy, which Oxford was always trying to establish. It was a worthy ambition; but it came to nothing. Newman had no organizing skill, no talent for creating new systems. He knew nothing about business. He did not understand the Irish, nor they him. The best authorities on Irish Education differed about his curriculum. The Irish gentry looked askance at the undertaking; and—worst of all—the Irish Primate distrusted Newman, and showed his distrust by thwarting and snubbing him. Through these clouds there suddenly burst a ray of light and encouragement. Cardinal Wiseman suggested that the Pope should confer on Newman the Episcopal dignity, as a suitable recognition of his gifts and labours, and with a view to strengthening his position in Ireland. Somehow or another, Newman's opponents got wind of the Pope's intention, and it never was fulfilled. This is Newman's

own note on the transaction: "The Cardinal never wrote to me a single word, or sent any kind of message to me, in explanation of the change of intention about me, till the day of his death."

The clouds, pierced for a moment by this ray of encouragement, were now as black as ever; and in 1858 he resigned the Rectorship of the University, and returned in profound dejection to England.

(3) Newman's pen was now idle; idleness of such an instrument could not long continue; but in resuming literary activity Newman only prepared for himself fresh disappointments. The Roman Hierarchy asked him to edit the New English Version of the Scriptures which the Roman Synod in England had recommended. Newman saw in the invitation another sign of God's leading, and he accepted the task with reverent and joyous thankfulness. But more than a year passed before he heard anything more on the subject. Opposition to the scheme came from America, where a Roman Archbishop was engaged on a similar work. Newman was ready to abide by the decision of his ecclesiastical superiors. But time went by; nothing was done; and it became evident that Wiseman, if not hostile, was apathetic. "I found," says Newman, "that the Cardinal was washing his hands of the whole affair, and throwing the responsibility on me. . . . That there is some mystery about it, I know, though what it is I have not a dream. Father Faber, on his deathbed, told me that he knew how badly I had been treated in the matter."

Newman abandoned the task, and the Bishops

never asked him to resume it. Another great plan had been projected; "and yet another time the ecclesiastical rulers, after words of most flattering recognition, had seemed absolutely indifferent to the reality of his work."

(4) Newman's next attempt to serve the Church was made in the way of journalism. He was profoundly convinced that, if the Church of Rome was to retain her ascendancy in Europe, and regain it where she had lost it, she must put herself right with the intellectual world. She must no longer ignore history, or criticism, or physical science. She must no longer rely on unassisted logic to establish her fundamental positions. Still less must she depend for her authority on terror and ignorance and superstition. With the hope of disseminating higher views, he allied himself in turn with such publications as the *Atlantis*, the *Rambler*, the *Home and Foreign Review*. Those papers and the men who conducted them fought a gallant fight for mental freedom; but Newman only received further injury from his connexion with them. Rome disapproved, the publications came to an end, and Newman emerged with damaged reputation as a "bad Catholic"—a Liberal theologian, only the more dangerous because his loyalty to the Church could not be gainsaid—and was delated to Rome for heresy. He was now thoroughly sick at heart. "I am treated," he said, "like some wild incomprehensible beast, a spectacle for Dr. Wiseman to exhibit to strangers, as himself being the hunter who captured it." And again—"God has marked my course with almost unintermittent mortifications. Few, indeed,

successes has it been His Blessed Will to give me through life . . . but since I have been a Catholic, I seem to myself to have had nothing but failure."

(5) The string of disappointments is not yet complete, but, as Mr. Ward says, " the years 1859 to 1864 may be called the low-water mark of Newman's life-history." His health was bad; he thought the end was near. His spirits were at their lowest. His books had ceased to sell, and he had ceased to write. " His name was hardly known to the rising generation "; and it seemed as though his life was closing in the saddest of failures. The resuscitation of his fortunes came from an unexpected quarter. At the beginning of 1864 Charles Kingsley, then at the height of his vogue as Muscular Christian and Broad Churchman, made a sudden and unprovoked attack on Newman's veracity. Newman replied with alacrity, demanding the grounds of the attack. And then Kingsley, instead of frankly apologizing for his ill-mannered rashness, proceeded to entangle himself in discreditable endeavours to run away from what he had said, and yet leave the imputation of falsehood unrevoked. He struggled in contortions of baffled anger, " like a wild bull in a net," while Newman wove that mesh of logic, sarcasm, and contemptuous humour which formed the Introduction to the *Apologia pro vita sua.*

Never was a controversial victory more signal or more complete. Kingsley, all unwitting, had given Newman the opportunity for which he had longed, of " vindicating his character and conduct." Hence-

forward, whatever might be said about Newman, all England knew him for an honest man.

(6) The triumph over Kingsley, and the accession of public respect which had followed it, made a bright interval in Newman's darkened life; but disappointment was again at hand. He had long wished to establish a Hall for Roman Catholic students at Oxford, feeling sure that the University would not wean them from the Faith, but would open their eyes to aspects of life and thought which are not revealed to Seminarists. He believed that all the forces in Oxford which made for Faith would tend to come together, and that thereby the resistance to Rationalism among young men would be immeasurably strengthened. He felt that the establishment of a House of the Oratory at Oxford, with a suitable Church and imposing services, would serve the Catholic cause, which, as far as its material setting was concerned, was very poorly represented there; and, as he was human, he must have recalled his former ascendancy over undergraduate hearts, and hoped to reassert it. So he drew his plans and arranged his schemes, and actually bought the site for a house in Oxford. His intention was welcomed even by academical authorities. The English gentry rejoiced that their long exclusion from the University was drawing to an end; and everything looked prosperous for the new venture, when suddenly the usual blow fell. The English Hierarchy, acting under influence from Rome, forbade the scheme, and again Newman had to sit down beaten. "And now," he wrote from his house at Birmingham, "I am thrown

back again on my do-nothing life here—how marvellous!" Marvellous indeed it was; but yet one more rebuff remained to be administered.

(7) Newman has told us that, as a matter of personal conviction, he had always, after his submission to Rome, held the doctrine of the Papal Infallibility; but he held it subject to all the conditions and qualifications which history required and theologians had admitted. In 1867 he wrote thus: "I hold the Pope's Infallibility, not as a dogma, but as a theological opinion; that is, not as a certainty, but as a probability." This was a view of the matter which was intolerable to the "Ultramontane" school of ecclesiastical politicians.

The social and political aspect of Europe was threatening. The historic princedom of the Popes was dangerously undermined. There was a feeling of revolution in the air, and a tendency to fall away from the faith was visible whichever way one looked. Men's hearts were failing them for fear and for looking after those things that were coming on the earth. At this crisis the confidential advisers of the Papacy conceived a strange way of escape from gathering perils. They thought that an Œcumenical Council, meeting at Rome, would awe the world into submission. Pius IX. had spoken of such a council in 1864, intending it to discuss and counteract the evils which beset an age of apostasy. In 1867 he announced that it would be definitely summoned for the winter of 1869; and forthwith the wire-pullers at the Vatican, acting with their allies in England and elsewhere, determined that the Council, when it assembled.

should define the Papal Infallibility as an article of faith. "They seemed," says Mr. Ward, "to conceive of such a definition as a protest against an apostate world, and a crown of honour for the persecuted Pontiff." The years 1867-8-9 were years of great controversial stress, as the Roman Catholic world was sharply divided into those who welcomed, and those who deprecated, the prospect of the Definition. Among those who deprecated it was Newman, and once again he had to pass through the fire. "If ever he acted against his inclinations, and from a stern sense of duty, it was at this crisis. He had a full consciousness that many good but not far-seeing people, whom he respected, would condemn his attitude. . . . But throughout he believed himself to be defending the interests of Catholic theology against extremists who were—without realizing the effects of their action—setting it aside." He expected "untold good" from the Council, if only as bringing into formal acquaintance men from the most distant parts of the world; but he was anxious lest the assembled Bishops should treat such subjects as the Inspiration of the Bible, and the Intellectual Apprehension of God, with insufficient skill; while the prospect of the Definition filled him with dismay. The Council assembled in due course, and soon after it began its work he wrote his fears to his bishop, Dr. Ullathorne, concluding his letter thus: "With these thoughts before me, I am continually asking myself whether I ought not to make my feelings public; but all I can do is to pray those great early Doctors of the Church, whose intercession would decide the matter

—Augustine and the rest—to avert so great a calamity. If it is God's will that the Pope's Infallibility should be defined, then it is His Blessed Will to throw back the times and the moments of that triumph He has destined for His Kingdom; and I shall feel that I have but to bow my head to His Adorable Inscrutable Providence."

This letter was private; but, by some means never disclosed, it made its way into the public press, and naturally redoubled the wrath of the extremists against a man whom they regarded as at best a half-hearted Papalist, at worst a secret traitor to the Holy See. Once again that man was defeated, and his enemies triumphed. The dogma of the Infallibility was " defined " on the 18th of July 1870. Newman wrote to a friend, " Our good God is trying all of us with disappointment and sorrow just now; I allude to what has taken place at Rome. . . . It looks as if our Great Lord were in some way displeased with us."

(8) Newman " bowed his head," as he had promised, beneath this final blow; and for the next nine years he remained buried in his Oratorian home, emerging only to cross swords with Gladstone over the question of the Civil Allegiance of Roman Catholics. During this period of what looked like final retirement he wrote a solemn testament for the use of his friends after his death; from it I quote these words: " I have before now said, in writing to Cardinals . . . when I considered myself treated with slight and unfairness, ' So this is the return made to me for working in the Catholic cause for so many years'—*i.e.* to that effect.

I feel it still, and ever shall—but it was not a disappointed ambition which I was then expressing in words, but a scorn and wonder at the injustice shown me, and at the demand of toadyism on my part if I was to get their favour and the favour of Rome."

Those words, and others revealing "the real state of my mind, and what my cross has been," were written in 1876: but now a startling change was at hand. Pius IX. died in 1878, and Leo XIII. succeeded him. Newman had loved Pius personally, but had notoriously deplored his policy, and had suffered accordingly. The sentiments of Leo were believed to differ materially from those of his predecessor; and "the natural reaction of opinion—the swing of the pendulum from one Pontificate to another—seemed to some of Newman's friends a golden opportunity for securing for his great work for the Church the formal approval from Rome itself, which had been so long delayed."

So says Mr. Ward, and the Duke of Norfolk adds: "It appeared to me that in the cause both of justice and of truth it was of the utmost importance that the Church should put her seal on Newman's work." That "seal" could only take one form—the Cardinal's Hat. The Duke of Norfolk, in a private interview with the Pope, made the suggestion: it was graciously received. After various delays, some of which bore a suspicious resemblance to former frustrations, Newman received the supreme honour in May 1879. To the journal of 1876, from which the foregoing confession of disappointment is cited, he now appended this significant note: "Since writing the above I have been made a Cardinal!"

Turning for a moment from Newman's career to his character, we may say of him, as he said of himself, that he had a "morbidly sensitive skin," and this is about as bad an equipment for active life in a world of struggle as nature can bestow. That a pre-eminently sensitive man tastes more keenly than others the choice delights of life is probably true, but it is certain that he suffers a thousand miseries which tougher natures never feel. An acute sensitiveness may be allied with, though it is by no means a synonym for, keen sympathy with the sorrows of others, and so may gather round a man a band of grateful admirers; but it will never disarm an opponent, or turn a foe into a friend. Still less will it enable a man to force his way through clenched antagonisms, or to crush resistance as he marches towards his end. Then again a sensitive nature is

"Wax to receive, and marble to retain."

It may forgive, but it cannot forget, slights and injuries, buffets and bruises. Forgetfulness of injuries is the blessed lot of those who have inflicted them.

"Poor Newman!" said Cardinal Manning to the present writer, "he was a great hater"; and though the phrase had something of controversial rancour, it expressed a kind of truth. When Newman had been injured, he did not expose himself to a repetition of the injury. When he had been deceived, he did not give the deceiver a second opportunity. When he had been offended, he kept the offender at arm's length. There are curious traditions of personal

estrangements, lasting through years, between him and members of his own house; and there is on record a letter in which he told Archbishop Whately, with agreeable frankness, that though he had not purposely kept out of his way when Whately lately was paying a visit to Oxford, he was glad of the accident which prevented them from meeting.

And, yet once more, Newman was too much of an Idealist. He idealized the Calvinism in which he had been brought up, but soon found that it was hopelessly inadequate to the demands of the intellect and the broad facts of human life; and in his reaction from it he went perilously near the ways of thought which a few years later were stigmatized as Liberalism. When he had adopted the Tractarian position, he idealized the Anglican Bishops; and the dissipation of that ideal by contact with Episcopal realities, is the history of his submission to Rome. As a Roman Catholic he found even larger and more promising scope for Idealism, and disillusionments even profounder and more grievous. That to the end he idealized the Church of Rome—"the one oracle of truth and the one ark of salvation"—I cannot doubt, but he soon ceased to idealize Roman Bishops as he had before ceased to idealize their Anglican brethren; and to these must be added Cardinals and Jesuits, and politicians, and editors, and in short, all the agents by whom the Church of Rome does its practical work. To say that he was ever disillusioned about the Pope would be offensive and might be misleading, so let his own words stand. "I had been accustomed to believe that, over and

above that attribute of infallibility which attached to the doctrinal decisions of the Holy See, a gift of sagacity had in every age characterized its occupants. . . . I am obliged to say that a sentiment which history has impressed upon me, and impresses still, has been very considerably weakened as far as the present Pope (Pius IX) is concerned, by the experience of the result of the policy which his chosen councillors led him to pursue." From first to last Newman idealized the systems to which for the time he belonged, and when, in their working, they proved to be quite different from what he dreamed, the blow fell with a disabling force, and the people who wished ill to his schemes " grinned demnebly."

The sensitiveness which pervaded his nature all through was at its tenderest in the domain of Conscience. To him Conscience was " a Prophet in its predictions, a King in its imperiousness, a Priest in its benedictions and anathemas." Its faintest whisper was to him as certainly the Voice of God as though it had spoken amid the thunders of Sinai, and it taught him that, though the object which we seek may be the most important on earth, it must be sought with an incessant, scrupulous, almost morbid, regard for the ethical considerations which the search involves. His feelings, hopes, desires, prejudices, personal opinions, schemes of usefulness—all these Newman was ready and eager to sacrifice for the cause which absorbed his life. The one thing which he would not sacrifice was Conscience, and he who declines to sacrifice his conscience must look for his reward in a better world than this.

In a passage of vivid self-portraiture Newman described himself as "one whose natural impulse it has ever been to speak out; who has ever spoken too much rather than too little; who would have saved himself many a scrape if he had been wise enough to hold his tongue; who has ever been fair to the doctrines and arguments of his opponents; who has never slurred over facts and reasonings which told against himself; who has never shrunk from confessing a fault when he felt that he had committed one; who has ever consulted for others more than for himself; who has given up much that he loved and prized and could have retained, but that he loved honesty better than name, and Truth better than dear friends."

In 1894 Archbishop Benson wrote in his diary, "I never find any Oxford man realize how weak a man was Newman." Perhaps the passage which I have just quoted may help to explain our dulness.

ADELAIDE PROCTER

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A QUOTATION which I lately made from " a poetess whom no one in the present day remembers " brought me a shower of questions. " Do you mean Mrs. Hemans, or Mrs. Sigourney, or Mrs. Browning? Are you quoting Miss Jean Ingelow or Miss Emma Tatham? Or are you inventing, as Scott and George Eliot invented; forging a rhyme to suit your purpose and then crediting it to ' Anon ' or ' Old Song '? " But one or two correspondents have shown themselves more faithful to early loves, and have said, " Do let us hear a little more about Miss Procter." With all my heart; and we will begin with her beginnings.

Bryan Waller Procter was born in 1787 and died in 1874. He was a schoolfellow of Byron at Harrow, and Byron described him as " Euphues " in " Don Juan "—

> " Then there's my gentle Euphues, who, they say,
> Sets up for being a sort of moral Me—
> He'll find it rather difficult some day
> To turn out both, or either, it may be."

To be a Byron is a fate not conceded to two men in a generation; but to be moral is, happily, an easier ambition, and Bryan Procter, under his pen-name of " Barry Cornwall," contributed two hundred intensely moral poems in the *Literary Gazette*, edited Shakespeare, expurgated Jonson, biographized Lamb, and " selected " Browning. I should imagine that

his tragedy of *Mirandola*, his tale of *Marcian Colonna*, and his description of *The Flood of Thessaly* have long since perished; but most people remember his buoyant verses on the joys of ocean—

> "The sea! the sea! I love the sea,
> For I was born on the open sea."

As a matter of fact, he was born at Leeds, and his wife was inhuman enough to murmur this mendacious ditty in his ears when he lay tossing in livid agony between Dover and Calais. Mrs. Procter was, as may be inferred from this incident, a woman of much sprightliness and vigour. She was born in 1799, was a friend of Keats and Shelley, attended Harrow Speeches with Byron and Dr. Parr, kept a Sunday *Salon* for half a century, and lived till 1888.

The literary tastes of this remarkable couple were not transmitted to their only son, who became an Indian general, but were bestowed in double measure on their daughter, Adelaide Anne Procter, who was born in 1825 and died in 1864. Her love of poetry was so precocious that, before she could write, she made her mother copy her favourite pieces into a tiny album, concerning which Dickens said: "It looked as if she had carried it about as another little girl might have carried a doll." This love of poetry increased with increasing years, but she concealed her ambition in the way of authorship even from her nearest relations. Like most young writers of that period, she began by contributing, anonymously, to the *Book of Beauty*; and in 1853 she made a bolder plunge. *Household Words*, afterwards re-named *All*

the Year Round, was then edited by Dickens; and, as Dickens was an intimate friend and a frequent guest of Mr. and Mrs. Procter, it might have been natural for Adelaide Procter to base her appeal to the editor on grounds of friendship. But she chose a more independent line. "If," she said, "I send him, in my own name, verses that he does not honestly like, either it will be very painful to him to return them, or he will print them for papa's sake, and not for their own. So I have made up my mind to take my chance fairly with the unknown volunteers." She therefore assumed the pen-name of Miss Mary Berwick, addressed her letters from a circulating library, and sent a poem to *Household Words*. It was accepted, published, and praised; Miss Berwick was asked to send some more, and soon became a regular contributor, showing herself "remarkably business-like, punctual, self-reliant, and reliable." In December 1854, Dickens, going to dine with Mr. and Mrs. Procter, took with him an early proof of his Christmas number, and remarked, as he laid it on the drawing-room table, that it contained a very pretty poem by a Miss Berwick. Next day he learned that his unknown correspondent "Miss Berwick" was his young friend Adelaide Procter; and thenceforward she published in her own name. The total body of her work is small, and it is almost entirely comprehended in *Legends and Lyrics* and *A Chaplet of Verses*. She had, beyond question, a sincere vein of poetic feeling. She saw life and nature in their beautiful and pathetic aspects, and she had the gift of fluency and the knack of easy metre and satisfying

rhyme. Her poetry is perhaps slight, and certainly not profound; but it is wholly free from formality, priggishness, and pedantry; it is always pretty, even when it does not quite rise to the height of beauty; and it never torments the ear with a rhyme which is only true to the eye. The prevalent tone of her writing is pensive, and often melancholy; and she was, in the best sense of a word too often used as censure, a sentimentalist. It is, I suppose, through this quality of sentimentalism that so many of her poems became popular songs. "The Lost Chord" has, perhaps, had its day, but when sung by Antoinette Sterling to a popular audience, it used to stir a deep and wholesome emotion. Of the same type were "Three Roses," "Sent to Heaven," "The Angel's Bidding," "In the Wood," and a dozen more. "Sentimentality" is a synonym for affectation; but sentiment is one of the great realities of life, and, when it is uttered in fluent and harmonious verse, it takes men captive even in spite of themselves. Sentimental Adelaide Procter certainly was, but Dickens has left it on record that to imagine her gloomy or despondent would be a curious mistake. "She was exceedingly humorous, and had a great delight in humour. Cheerfulness was habitual with her; she was very ready at a sally or a reply, and in her laugh there was an unusual vivacity, enjoyment, and sense of drollery. . . . She was a friend who inspired the strongest attachments; she was a finely sympathetic woman, with a great accordant heart and a sterling, noble nature."

Some poets there have been, and poetesses too, who

made their divine vocation an excuse for neglecting, and even despising, all human duties. Not of that loathsome crew was Adelaide Procter. Her bright and tender spirit was the joy of her home; and out of doors she laboured even beyond the limits of her strength in the social service of humanity. "Now it was the visitation of the sick that had possession of her; now it was the sheltering of the homeless; now it was the elementary teaching of the densely ignorant; now it was the raising up of those who had wandered and got trodden underfoot; now it was the wider employment of her own sex in the general business of life; now it was all these things at once." She spent her health and her earnings in establishing and tending a "Night Refuge for the Homeless Poor," and commended it in words of burning sympathy. "We have all known that in this country, in this town, many of our miserable fellow-creatures were pacing the streets through the long weary nights, without a roof to shelter them, without food to eat, with their poor rags soaked in rain, and only the bitter winds of heaven for companions. . . . It is a marvel that we could sleep in peace in our warm, comfortable homes with this horror at our very door."

Poverty and privation were not the only forms of suffering which appealed to Adelaide Procter. Her experience in works of rescue and reclamation taught her to look back from the evil to its cause, and she saw this cause, or a great part of it, in the unemployment of women. Lord Brougham's favourite creation, "The British Association for the Promotion of Social

Science," made her a member of a committee to enquire into this subject, and she joined herself to Miss Emily Faithfull in promoting the employment of women as compositors, and edited the first-fruits of that movement—a volume of prose and verse set up in type by women, and called, in honour of the First Woman in England, *Victoria Regia.*

The briefest notice of Adelaide Procter must take account of her religion, for every line she wrote was steeped in it. She had fallen early under the influence of the Oxford Movement, and the deeds of martyrs, the ministries of saints, the fruits and flowers of the cloistered life, were themes on which she always loved to dwell. She wrote several hymns which found wide acceptance, and, with regard to one of these—

> "My God, I thank Thee, who hast made
> The earth so bright;
> So full of splendour and of joy,
> Beauty and light,—

a staunch Evangelical, Bishop Bickersteth, said: "This most beautiful hymn touches the chord of thankfulness in trial as perhaps no other hymn does, and is thus most useful for the visitation of the sick." She was one of the distressed Anglicans who followed Manning and Dodsworth in the exodus of 1851, and for the remainder of her life she was a devoted daughter of the Church of Rome. Much of her most effective poetry is inspired by the devotional practices with which she now became familiar; and the only note of strong indignation which I can recall in all her writings was evoked by the doings—or

what she believed to be the doings—of "The Irish Church Mission for Converting the Catholics." She heard that, at a time of famine, the Irish peasants were bribed with doles to change their religion, and she burst into indignant protest. The Protestant Church, securely, as it seemed, established and richly endowed, ministered only to a handful of the population; and in this passionate outburst we feel the working of the spirit which, not ten years later, delivered Catholic Ireland from the yoke of an unjust ascendancy. The poet is addressing England—

"Partakers of thy glory
We do not ask to be,
Nor bid thee share with Ireland
The empire of the sea.

. . . . . .

Take, if thou wilt, the earnings
Of the poor peasant's toil,
Take all the scanty produce
That grows on Irish soil,
To pay the alien preachers
Whom Ireland will not hear,
To pay the scoffers at a creed
Which Irish hearts hold dear."

All this England may do, and yet leave Ireland not mortally wounded; but to attack her spiritual faith through her bodily privations, this is, indeed, to deal a felon-blow.

"Curs'd is the food and raiment
For which a soul is sold;
Tempt not another Judas
To barter God for gold."

HENRY KINGSLEY

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A LADY writes: " I do not remember that you have ever told us anything about Henry Kingsley; although, from references to characters in his books, I think you must be a lover of this delightful and almost forgotten novelist. Do tell us something about him. . . . One can hardly know too much about the Kingsleys." To this challenge I respond with great goodwill; for Charles, George, and Henry Kingsley were indeed a noteworthy trio of brothers, and with two of them I had enough of personal acquaintance to give me a special interest in their writings. " We are," said Charles Kingsley in 1865, " the *disjecta membra* of a most remarkable pair of parents. Our talent, such as it is, is altogether hereditary. My father was a magnificent man in body and mind, and was said to possess every talent except that of using his talents. My mother, on the contrary, had a quite extraordinary practical and administrative power; and she combines with it, even at the age of seventy-nine, my father's passion for knowledge, and the sentiment and fancy of a young girl."

In this distribution of hereditary gifts, it is not difficult to see which fell to the lot of the third son—Henry—who was born in 1839 and died in 1876. Of " practical and administrative power " he had absolutely none; but he had a wiry and active body, un-

bounded energy and pluck, and a keen love of romantic adventure. His early home was the Rectory House of Chelsea, close to that wonderful old church which all Americans but not all English people know, "where the great flood of change beats round the walls, and shakes the door in vain, but never enters." When living at Chelsea Rectory, he went, as a day-boy, to King's College School, and from thence he was transferred in 1850 to Worcester College, Oxford. "At the University," writes his contemporary, Sir Edwin Arnold, "he did nothing commensurate with his great natural abilities (for I consider him quite the equal in genius of his eldest brother Charles). He gave himself to athletics and social life; being always generous, manly, and of an inner temper nobler than his external manners. He was one of the best scullers on the river, and, for a wager, ran a mile, rowed a mile, and trotted a mile within fifteen minutes."

In 1853 he went down from Oxford without a degree, and set out for the Australian gold-fields in search of fortune. But fortune did not come, and he enlisted in the Mounted Police—a service for which his pluck, activity, light weight, and love of horses exactly fitted him. Unfortunately, however, he was obliged, in the way of official duty, to attend a public execution, and he left the police in disgust; but not without having accumulated a mass of material which he afterwards turned to excellent account. During this expatriation he ceased to communicate with home; but in 1858 he suddenly reappeared in England, settled himself in a cottage at Eversley,

where his brother Charles was Rector, and, to the astonishment of his family, became a novelist. Twelve volumes of his work face me as I write. In 1864 he married, and moved to Wargrave, in the Valley of the Thames. "He was the kindest and most chivalrous of men," said one of his neighbours. "Perhaps more emphatic in conversation that I could comfortably respond to," adds a lady. "A bright-eyed, pleasant-looking fellow," says a contemporary, "a trifle under the medium height, with the carriage of an athlete, a light-weight champion, or a crack rider in an artillery regiment." In 1869 he went to Edinburgh, and undertook the editorship of the *Daily Review*. The experiment was disastrous, and in the following year he abandoned the editorial chair to act as war-correspondent in the Franco-German campaign. He was present at the Battle of Sedan, and is said to have been the first Englishman to enter Metz. In 1872 he returned to England, and resumed his literary work; but his health soon failed, and he died in his forty-seventh year at Cuckfield, in Sussex, where he lies buried.

So much for Henry Kingsley's history. What of his writings? It is easy enough to criticize them. As Dryden said of Elkanah Settle, "his style was boisterous, and his prose incorrigibly lewd." Half his books were pot-boilers. He did not always write grammar, and he was constantly "mugging to the gallery," taking liberties with his reader, and obtruding his own personality. All this, and more, may be urged in disparagement, and yet, when all is said and done, he had the one essential gift for novel-writing

—he could make a plot. As soon as we have got into his stories, we want to know how they will end. His heroes and heroines are real men and women, and we follow their fortunes with eager interest till the last chapter lifts us into triumph, or (and this more frequently) abandons us to dejection.

Let us take the principal stories one by one. *Geoffrey Hamlyn* made Henry Kingsley's fame. When he wrote it he was still reeking of Australia —indeed, the ground-work of it had been laid before he set sail for England. "Alone among our novelists he has focussed for us the early life of a new country, the first building-up of a great commonwealth." *Geoffrey Hamlyn* describes the loves and fortunes and lives and deaths of a company of neighbours who emigrated from Devonshire and established themselves three hundred miles south of Sydney, when Van Diemen's Land was still a penal settlement. Bush-ranging plays a leading part in the narrative of their adventures; and the escape of Sam Buckley and his sweetheart from the bush-rangers' gang is one of the most thrilling episodes in fiction. One cannot read it without holding one's breath and hearing the tramp of the marauders' horses as they near the spot where the fugitives are concealed. With this fine tale one may link some portion of *Ravenshoe*, and the whole of *The Hillyars and the Burtons*, which begins with a Dickens-like account of life in Chelsea in the forties, and then transfers itself to New South Wales. In both hemispheres Kingsley is writing his autobiography, and this book is to me the most interesting that he ever wrote.

The main interest of *Ravenshoe* is altogether different, and, in some of its mysterious involutions, it seems infected with the morbid fear of Romanism which Henry Kingsley may have imbibed from his brother Charles. The glory of the book is the description of the Battle of the Alma, and I have heard soldiers say that Charles Ravenshoe's memory of the charge is exactly true to life in similar conditions.

"Charles was sixth man from the right of the rear rank of the third troop. He could see the tails of the horses immediately before him, and could remark that his front-rank man had a great patch of oil on the right shoulder of his uniform. . . . Charles would have given ten years of his life to know what was going on on the other side of the hill. But no. There they sate, and he had to look at the back of the man before him; and at this time he came to the conclusion that the patch of grease on his right shoulder was the same shape as the map of Sweden. A long, weary two hours was spent like this, and then the word was given to go forward. . . . Charles saw only the back of the man before him, and the patch of grease on his shoulder; but ever after, when the battle of the Alma was mentioned before him, Charles at once began thinking of the map of Sweden."

In *Austin Elliot* Henry Kingsley lapsed into the didactic vein, and the book is principally an exposure of the misery and shame which grew up under "the accursed system of the Duello." In *The Harveys* he deals similarly with Spiritualism. *Stretton* is a fine tale of schoolboy-friendship and woman's love,

culminating splendidly in the Indian Mutiny. In *Silcote of Silcotes* he conducts us lovingly through the Valley of the Thames and the sands of Bagshot, to unexpected conclusions at Turin and Genestrello. *Valentin* is the story of Sedan, told from a strongly anti-French point of view.

In all these books Kingsley was more or less describing what he had seen and known. In *Mademoiselle Mathilde* he makes a sudden plunge into French history, and gives a good picture of expiring feudalism and the part which it played in preparing the Revolution. His friends ought to love this book, if only because he loved it. "Of all the ghosts," he said, "which I have called up in this quaint trade of writing fiction only two remain with me, and never quit me. The others come and go, and I love them well enough; but the two who are with me always are the peak-faced man Charles Ravenshoe and the lame French girl Mathilde."

What is the charm of Henry Kingsley's writing? As I said before, he had the power without which style, dialogue, analysis of character, description of scenery, and all the rest are nothing worth—the power of constructing a plot. Then, again, though his writing was almost insolently careless and faulty, yet here and there it burst into passages of vivid eloquence. He had a rich though unregulated humour, and a closely observant eye for Nature, both in her softer and in her stormier aspects. The loss of the *Titanic* sent me back to the description of a storm in *Our Brown Passenger;* and, when I collated that description with the loss of the *Wainoora*

in *The Hillyars and the Burtons*, I felt that the tragedy of the sea had seldom been more powerfully presented than by Henry Kingsley.

"Where was the *Wainoora?* . . . From the wild shore, from the wilder sea, from the coral reef and sandbank, from the storm-tossed sailor, or from the lonely shepherd on the forest-lands above the cruel ocean, no answer but this—she had sailed out of port, and she never made port again. A missing ship, with the history of her last agony unwritten for ever."

Another charm of Henry Kingsley's writing is to be found in its actuality. I do not mean that his characters are always lifelike, or his situations always probable; but one feels, as one reads, that he wrote what he felt. Lady Ritchie, than whom there is no more delicate critic, notes this characteristic. "He seems to have lived his own books, battered them out, and forced them into their living shapes; to have felt them and been them all: writing not so much from imagination as from personal experience and struggle."

Although Kingsley lived what is called a wild life, and knocked about the world in all sorts of rough company, his writing from first to last is unstained by a moral blot. Everything that he wrote is pure and upright and manly; and where he handles a distinctly religious theme, as in the scene in the Rajah's dungeon where Jem Mordaunt is preparing himself for death, we feel the touch of personal conviction. Lady Ritchie, who visited him in his last illness, has described the naturalness and sim-

plicity and courage with which he faced the end. Perhaps in those last days he remembered his own premonitory words in *Ravenshoe*:—

"In the long watches of the winter night, when one has awoke from some evil dream, and lies sleepless and terrified with the solemn pall of darkness around one—in such still dead times only, lying as in the silence of the tomb, one realizes that some day we shall lie in that bed and not think at all: that the time will soon come when we must die.

"Our preachers remind us of this often enough, but we cannot realize it in a pew in broad daylight. You must wake in the middle of the night to do that, and face the thought like a man—that it will come, and come to ninety-nine in a hundred of us, not in a maddening clatter of musketry as the day is won; or in carrying a line to a stranded ship, or in such glorious times, when the soul has mastery over the body: but in bed, by slow degrees. It is in darkness and silence only that we realize this; and then let us hope that we humbly remember that death has been conquered for us, and that, in spite of our unworthiness, we may defy him. And, after that, sometimes will come the thought—Are there no evils worse even than death?"

JOHN INGLESANT

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" Some books, which I should never dream of opening at dinner, please me at breakfast and *vice versa*." The sentence occurs in Lord Macaulay's journal, and Mr. Gladstone thus commented on it: " There is more subtlety in this distinction than would easily be found in any passage of his writings. But mark how quietly both meals are handed over to the dominion of the master-propensity!" Such indulgence was all very well for the celibate historian, who breakfasted and dined, at the hour which suited him, in " chambers every corner of which was library," but most people are forced to think of catching the train or the tram about 9 A.M., and to share their evening meal with " a howling herd of hungry boys." And yet I think that every one who has read with the heart as well as the head, and has really assimilated his reading, must feel the suitability of certain books to certain moods—and the converse not less acutely. One would not choose *The Bride of Lammermoor* to enhance the merriment of Christmas, nor ponder *The Ring and the Book* in the delirium of a contested election. But spring never returns without recalling all true Wordsworthians to " The Daffodils," and at Christmas the hymn " On the morning of Christ's Nativity " is as inevitable as *Adeste Fideles*.

Writing now amid the solemnities of Holy Week,[1] my thoughts turn to the notable book which is named at the head of this chapter; for, more than most, it is pervaded by that penetrating sense of Religion, without which all ecclesiastical observance is " a tale of little meaning, though the words are strong."

The genesis of *John Inglesant* was certainly remarkable. Joseph Henry Shorthouse was a Quaker, and a manufacturer (I think of vitriol) at Birmingham. The painful affliction of a paroxysmal stammer unfitted him for society. His business was not exacting; and he had no children to occupy his thoughts at home. So he became a student, at first reading discursively, but tending, as years went on, to concentrate on a line of mystical piety. From his Quakerish antecedents he derived a profound belief in the Inward Light, and a love of that impalpable theology which goes by the name of mysticism. From mysticism he passed to the idea of a visible church, and of the material *media* of spiritual realities; so he was baptized, and became a devoted adherent of the Church of England, yet never surrendered his perfect freedom of judgment. " I distinguish absolutely," he said, " between sacramentalism and sacerdotalism; they seem to me mutually destructive. So long as the clergy confine themselves to their sacramental office, I look upon them as THE channel of grace. When they depart from this, and act and talk out of their own heads, I pay no more attention to them than I do to laymen." Plato, and Molinos, and Jacob Boehme had been

[1] 1912.

Shorthouse's favourite authors; and now he began to realize the refined beauty of Anglican devotion, and became an enthusiastic admirer of such men as George Herbert and John Evelyn. By degrees, his shadowy conceptions of religious truth crystallized into a definite theory; and he cast that theory into the form of what he termed a "Philosophical Romance," naming the book *John Inglesant*. It occupied his leisure for several years, and was completed in 1877. At first it was privately printed, handed about among friends, and read with secret bewilderment in the villas of Edgbaston. Eventually he resolved to publish it, and sent it, with ill-success, to a famous firm of publishers, my friend James Payn rejecting it as unreadable. In a moment of happier inspiration, the house of Macmillan accepted it; and, when in 1880 it was given to the public, its success was instantaneous and universal. Some of this success no doubt was due to its style, a little archaic, and not always quite correct, but full of light and colour and stately music; some to the peculiar vein of religious philosophy, which few could understand but all could admire; some to the graphic pictures of life and society at one of the epoch-making periods of modern history. But, successful as the book was, it never lacked critics; and it is instructive to recall the comments—not of the "old Liberal hacks" whom all Religion infuriates—but of dispassionate and instructed readers. In 1881 Dr. Liddon wrote:—

"I have been reading *John Inglesant*. The writer knows a great deal about the seventeenth century,

though I should suppose that some of his knowledge was unbalanced. The book gives me the impression of being written by a man who had taken up the study of the classics (especially Plato) and of theology late in life, and was overpowered by his acquisitions, or at any rate unable to digest them. . . . In the description of the Renaissance (life and art), on which he has expended much pains, I trace the influence of J. A. Symonds and Pater."

These criticisms strike me as perfectly fair, and, read in their context, they make me feel sure that Liddon, whose theology was accurate and logical to the last degree, was repelled by the mysticism—or perhaps he would have called it mistiness—which from first to last marked John Inglesant's religion. Lord Acton approached the book from the historical side. He notes a mistaken date, a misunderstood event, a misinterpreted character. He perpetually asks, with the rather tiresome insistence of the historian, "Did this or that actually happen, at the time stated, under the circumstances described?" And, when he has answered his own questions in the negative, he seems to think that he has seriously disparaged what professes to be a "philosophical romance." And yet, after all said and done, he wrote: "I have read nothing more thoughtful and suggestive since *Middlemarch*," and this was no light praise from a critic who ranked George Eliot with Shakespeare, and first saw revealed in *Middlemarch* "her superiority to some of the greatest writers."

John Inglesant is a book easily accessible to all my readers, and, I suppose, abundantly familiar to most;

so I must forbear to trace the fascinating, though rather morbid, story of the hero's religious development, and the strange vicissitudes, political and theological, through which it led him. As my space is limited, I will confine myself to indicating a few passages of peculiar interest and beauty, closing with one which has a special appropriateness to a world making ready for Easter Day.

The story of *John Inglesant* falls naturally into two parts; the scene of the first is laid in England, of the second in Italy. I will take them in inverse order. Shorthouse has a fine passage describing the sunset as it gilds the spires of Rome, and Lord Acton observes, with his habitual pungency, "There are no spires in Rome," but incidentally goes on to say—what was true—"I hear that the author has never been in Italy," adding, with characteristic candour, "That accounts for many topographical mistakes, and leaves a margin to his credit." The Italian part of the book contains, amid much that is beautiful and much that is exciting, one passage charged with a purely ethical message. In describing the midnight ride from Florence to Pistoia, Shorthouse attained the highest perfection of his descriptive style; and made, as he himself avowed, his anxiously considered contribution to a sacred cause which Romance too often blasphemes. I return now from Italy to England, and here, though perhaps the interest is less intense, the atmosphere is clearer and the life more natural. To achieve successful word-painting when one is describing a country which one has never seen, is an achievement of genius; but Shorthouse seems

happier—more at his ease—when he is reproducing an English landscape, with its meadows and woods and running waters, its grey churches and its moated halls. In Shropshire and in Worcestershire, in Oxfordshire, Wiltshire, and Huntingdonshire, his observation is equally close and his touch equally felicitous.

Not long ago I avowed in print my detestation of ghosts and spooks and apparitions and all forms of sorcery and necromancy; but one must confess that these things have laid a strong hold on human imagination, and they find a natural place in a philosophical romance. Whether Shorthouse believed in them, I know not; I only know that the scene where the betrayed Strafford appears in a vision of the night to his faithless King is one of the most powerful scenes in this strangely powerful book. But we must not end on a note of censure even when the subject is Charles I. There were holy and loyal souls that loved and honoured him to the end, and in such devout company John Inglesant first caught sight of that beatific vision which, through all the subsequent permutations of his life, served to quicken his conscience and to nerve his wavering will. The scene is laid in the parish church of Little Gidding, and Inglesant is awaiting the mysterious summons which will soon call him to take his part in the desperate encounters of that troublous time:—

"Above the altar, which was profusely bedecked with flowers, the antique glass of the east window, which had been carefully repaired, contained a figure of the Saviour of an early and severe type. The form was

gracious and yet commanding, having a brilliant halo round the head, and being clad in a long and apparently seamless coat; the two forefingers of the right hand were held up to bless. Kneeling upon the half-pace, as he received the sacred bread and tasted the holy wine, this gracious figure entered into Inglesant's soul, and stillness and peace unspeakable, and life, and light, and sweetness, filled his mind. He was lost in a sense of rapture, and earth and all that surrounded him faded away. Heaven itself seemed to have opened to him, and One fairer than the fairest of the angelic hosts to have come down to earth."

STYLE

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"Le Steel Say Lum—the style is the Man, that's why it's so important for us to attend to Style," said Mr. Edward Ponderevo, when considering the value of a French advertisement for "Tono-Bungay," and added, with great truth, "As for accent, no Englishman has an accent. No Englishman pronounces French properly. It's all a bluff."

The Style is the Man. I linger lovingly over the words, because they have just received a pointed and flattering application to my own case. An unknown friend invites me to write on Style, "with illustrations from the works of Literary Men." Unfolding his theme, my friend enumerates several styles—"the distinguished style, the strong, racy, graceful styles, the commonplace and ponderous styles," and others. And then, after referring to an article of mine published some years ago, he says, reflectively. "I am inclined to think that that article reached the 'Distinguished' level." Yes—The Style is the Man; and a writer who even once, in a long life of literary composition, has reached "the Distinguished level," must himself be a Distinguished Man. It was all very well for Mr. Ponderevo to pride himself on his skill in penning advertisements, but I, too, am an author, and "Le Steel Say Lum." Thus encouraged, I proceed with the task assigned to

me, but I fear that the limits of space will not allow me to indulge my friends with many "illustrations from the works of Literary Men." He must kindly take my opinions for what they are worth, and confirm or refute them by reference to books.

Matthew Arnold once said to me—"People think I can teach them style. What stuff it all is! Have something to say, and say it as clearly as you can. That is the only secret of style." *Have something to say*—excellent counsel. A man who sits down to write, having nothing to say, soon finds himself playing with words for their own sake. He is not using them to express his meaning, for he has no meaning to express; but is choosing them because they are rare, or melodious, or emphatic, and is arranging them in the combinations and sequences in which they will sound prettiest or most forcibly attract attention. Hence come preciousness, and artificiality, and a thousand evils. "Have something to say"; and, then, "say it as clearly as you can." This canon at once dismisses the "ponderous" style to which my correspondent justly objects. A man who wished to say as clearly as he could that he was going to bed would not say, "Ere yet I consign my limbs to repose." For the perfection of the ponderous style the reader is referred to Miss Jenkyns' letters in "Cranford"; and Dr. Johnson at his worst runs her close.

What, on the other hand, are "clear" styles? Pre-eminently, Arnold's own. He realized (with Mr. Ponderevo) that "French is a very useful language—puts a point on things"; and, though critics have censured his style as too French, it makes

amends by being the perfection of lucidity. In my humble judgment, the greatest master of English prose in the Victorian age was Cardinal Newman, and, in his style, light and colour and music and all the best treasures of our English tongue are joined with a crystalline clearness. Newman's closest disciple in the realm of letters was R. W. Church, Dean of St. Paul's, by Lord Morley pronounced to be the finest flower of Oxford culture; and his style has exactly the same clearness as his master's, though the general texture of his prose is less rich and more austere. Every boy who uses his pen has to go through a period of Macaulay. The History and the Essays are imposed upon him, as Shakespeare and Milton are imposed upon men. And for a few years we think nothing so beautiful as Macaulay's trick of cutting up a paragraph into short, sharp sentences, and then rounding it off with a rhetorical thunder-roll. After three or four years of this apprenticeship, we pass on to masters at once subtler and simpler; but from Macaulay we have learnt clearness. His judgments were often mistaken, and always prejudiced, but his mind was perfectly expressed in his writing. No human being could ever misunderstand a sentence that Macaulay wrote: that was "the Style," and "the Man" was like unto it. "I wish," said one of his friends, "that I could be as cocksure about anything as Tom Macaulay is about everything."

Perhaps we do not fully appreciate the full value of lucidity in style until we are confronted with its opposite. Let any one who wishes to know the

obscurity of which the English language is capable study the writings of the late Bishop Westcott, and then he will return with a fresh zest to the *Apologia*, or *St. Paul and Protestantism*. For the "strong" style, I could not refer my friend to a more perfect instance than William Cobbett, worthily echoed in our own day in the Public Correspondence of John Bright, who wrote thus concerning a slanderous opponent—"He may not know that he is ignorant, but he cannot be ignorant that he lies. I think the speaker was named Smith. He is a discredit to the numerous family of that name." Of the "racy" style—the style bubbling with fun and sarcasm, yet using each joke to clinch an argument—the supreme example is Sydney Smith. To have absorbed his Essays and the *Letters of Peter Plymley* is to have acquired an entirely new sense of the function of Humour in serious controversy.

"Graceful" is a rather more elastic word. Thackeray's was, methinks, a graceful style, drawing part of its grace from Latin and some from French. Froude's writing, on other accounts to be detested, is admirable for grace. Dean Stanley, describing a landscape or a pageant, was graceful exactly where the hack-writer is clumsiest and most ponderous; and Mr. Frederic Harrison, depicting an historical scene or building, disposes of the ridiculous superstition that learning and grace are incompatible.

Of the "Commonplace" style—the style which is grammatically correct, but contains not a spark of distinction, interest, or character—we have indeed abundant examples all around us. It has

been cultivated with great success by historical writers. It is seen to perfection in the historical works of the late Sir Spencer Walpole, while J. R. Green's pictures and patches, and Mr. Herbert Paul's epigrams and antitheses, are the vehement efforts of historians to shake themselves free from commonplace.

The "Distinguished" style must be approached with reverence, especially by a writer who has only once attained to it, and in discussing it some cross-division is inevitable. Distinction is not incompatible with other virtues. Newman, Arnold, Froude, and Stanley all wrote "distinguished" styles, though their special distinction may have lain in some particular quality, such as lucidity, or picturesqueness, or grace. Distinction may mean distinctiveness—the quality in a style which makes one say, "This must be Sydney Smith," or "That certainly is Macaulay"; or else it may mean what Matthew Arnold meant by "the Grand Style," and may therefore be common to several writers of the highest rank. If this is what we mean by distinction, Gibbon's style was distinguished, and still more so Burke's—"the greatest man since Milton." Ruskin's style was in both senses distinguished. He handled the English language as it had never been handled before, eliciting undreamed-of harmonies, and visions of loveliness which, till he interpreted them, had escaped the ken of man. And, though his writings bear on every page the traces of the laborious file, it often attains the very height of rhetorical beauty.

From the days of Jeremy Taylor and Isaac Barrow the English pulpit has had a literature of its own. I doubt if any one could nowadays read Henry Melvill, esteemed by Mr. Gladstone the greatest preacher he had ever heard; but there are sermons of Liddon's, more especially those preached before the University of Oxford, in which the "Grand Manner" of sacred eloquence is maintained in its perfection. If by a "Distinguished" style we mean a style which at once proclaims its authorship, which makes us say, "So-and-so and no one else wrote that," we find a striking instance in the style of the Rev. H. Scott Holland, Regius Professor of Divinity at Oxford. I forbear to describe it except negatively—it is not "commonplace."

But all this time I have been, as it were, only skirmishing round my subject. Now I must grapple it. Who of writers now living is the greatest exponent of the "Distinguished" style? I answer, without hesitation, Lord Morley. Indeed he seems to me to stand alone. His style is natural, easy, fluent, lucid. Here and there it takes a turn which suggests foreign influence; but English prose, even in its greatest days, never was too proud to borrow additional adornment from a wider world. It is full of life and fire and colour; it moves to no ordered march, but just as it is swayed by the inspiration of the moment. It seems to me to be the one utterance now left to us which is a worthy vehicle of the highest and most solemn thinking. "The doubtful doom of human kind" may be a melancholy, but it is an ennobling, subject of contemplation, and he who has

long gazed on it with clear eyes and a steady soul will have learnt to think nobly, and to find words which match his thought.

Experience has shown me that to utter the word "Style" to a circle of cultivated readers is as rash as to whistle when an avalanche is on the move. Heedless of risk, one pursues one's path, with one's mind full of pleasant thoughts, till they incautiously express themselves in sound, and then down comes the accumulated mass. To any one contemplating a discourse on Style, I would say, as the Alpine peasant said to the young man who cried "Excelsior" (when, by the way, he meant something else):

> "Beware the pine-tree's withered branch!
> Beware the awful avalanche!"

Ever since I first wrote of Style these allied terrors have been rattling round my head, and even now I am by no means sure that I have done with the pelting of this pitiless storm. "The pine-tree's withered branch" may be taken to typify the older sort of scholar—Carp of Brasenose, and his rival Mr. Casaubon—who resent my neglect of the ancients. "You affect," they say, "to write on Style, and you do not mention Plato. Had Cicero no style? Did you ever hear of an obscure pamphleteer called John Milton, and do you know the sources from which his style was drawn?" To these ungenerous reproaches I can only reply that, when a friend asked me to write about style, I understood him to be thinking of modern English. But this is no sufficient defence against the over-hanging peril. The "pine-tree's withered branch" may be successfully evaded, but

who shall shield me from the " awful avalanche " of younger criticism? Every post brings a letter protesting against the omission of some favourite name. Froude evidently has a strong following, and his admirers complain that I gave him grudging praise. But the description of the execution of Mary Queen of Scots can never be forgotten or forgiven. An Oxford don, with a fellow-feeling for other dons, says, " You ought to have treated Pater "; but Pater was self-conscious, and his style is full of the preciousness and artificiality which I began by proscribing. A dignitary, who is also a Cambridge man, is grieved because I cited Westcott as a type of obscurity, and says that Westcott was a Mystic. But, as F. D. Maurice used to say, " I wish people would believe that Mysticism is not another name for Mistiness." The world, we know, is full of Stevensonians, but, though they are all devoted to the master, they do not seem to be agreed about his merits. " Surely a magician," writes one. " Conscious, elaborate, and distinguished," says another—a curious combination of attributes.

Mr. Herbert Paul once observed, in his pungent way, that he almost wished that Matthew Arnold had not translated "Gorgo and Praxinoe"; for most people fancied that Theocritus had never written any thing else. This thought recurs to my mind when I answer a critic who says, " Surely dear old Charles Lamb deserves a place among English stylists." Assuredly Yes, and among the highest: only let his admirers bind themselves by solemn oaths never again to mention Roast Pig or Mrs. Sarah Battle. One of

my critics cites De Quincey: a similiar caution applies to *Murder Considered as One of the Fine Arts*. When we are trying to infect others with our own enthusiasms in literature, we must be careful not to insist too heavily on our favourite bits; and no one needs the caution oftener than the present writer.

Has George Eliot come to the end of her reign? I hope not; but it is significant that only one of my critics has remonstrated against the omission of her name, and even he condemns her later style as "loaded and artificial." Twenty years ago I should have been snowed-under by similar reproaches, and the protesters would have admired equally the style of *Silas Marner* and the style of *Theophrastus Such*. For my own part I am a staunch believer in George Eliot's genius, though I should not call her "a second Shakespeare," nor affirm that she could have written the Bible if it had not been written already. Those eulogies are rather too boisterous; but I reckon her as one of the greatest of English novelists. She had the indispensable power of constructing a plot; never more subtly than in the despised *Felix Holt*. She had humour, pathos, lifelike dialogue, knowledge of nature, and a keen insight into the hidden springs of human action. But somehow I should never have considered her style remarkable. No doubt it is very good; correct, clear, and resonant; but it is not, I think, plainly marked out from other good English of its time. It is not individual, and I should not call it particularly distinguished.

Another critic reminds me of J. H. Shorthouse. Why did I not include the author of *John Inglesant?*

(The rest of his books may be disregarded). Well, I think because he is "precious," over-elaborated, and self-conscious; and when he tries to write archaic English—the English of the time that he is describing—he constantly slips into modernism and journalese. But as I said in the last chapter, there are passages in *John Inglesant*—the Communion at Little Gidding, the apparition of Strafford to Charles, and the midnight ride through the Italian forest — which one will remember as long as one remembers anything.

The literature of the pulpit requires a paragraph to itself. Newman's Anglican Sermons would, I suppose, be unanimously pronounced supreme, not only for their spiritual discernment, but for their incomparable felicity of phrase. We do not forget Matthew Arnold's tribute to the "words which were a religious music, subtle, sweet, mournful," flowing in his undergraduate days from the pulpit of St. Mary's Church. Newman's closest disciple was Dean Church, of whom I have already spoken, and whose style is seen to perfection in his sermons. Those who are not afraid of a little difficulty in their religion are recommended to study the sermons of J. B. Mozley, and I will not be laughed out of my conviction that F. W. Farrar in his early days was the master of a very splendid eloquence. If the gainsayer should murmur that it was tinged with Ruskinese it is not for me to say that it was the worse on that account.

"Hang your preachers," cries an angry physicist. "Barrow be blowed. Who the deuce was Melvill? If clericalism had not absolutely warped your intellect,

you would say that Huxley was the greatest master of style who ever addressed a popular audience." I bow my head before this reproach, in patient, deep disdain. It was no clerical pen that drew the picture of "Professor Huxley, in a white sheet, brought up at the Surrey Tabernacle between two deacons, whom that great physicist, in his own clear and nervous language, would no doubt describe as 'of weak mental organization and strong muscular frame,' and penitently confessing that science contradicts herself." There is Arnold's tribute to Huxley's style.

When I am asked why I say so little about living writers, I suppose the answer is that I know a good many of them, and wish to keep friends with them all. But one risk I will venture to take, and will record my opinion that Mr. George Trevelyan writes an almost perfect style, as clear and easy and natural as running water, and as full of lights and shades and deeps and shallows.

As I bring this chapter to a close, there comes into my hand an Examination Paper, recently propounded by a famous College to candidates for its scholarships. From it I extract this admirable exercise in the study of Style:—

"Indicate the authors parodied in the following quotations, stating the grounds of your opinion:

(*a*) 'Professions lavishly effused and parsimoniously verified are alike inconsistent with the precepts of inner rectitude and the practice of external policy: let it not then be conjectured that because we are unassuming we are imbecile; that forbearance is any

indication of despondency, or humility of demerit.'

(*b*) ' I'd scarce done asking myself whether I'd formulated my inquiry into the identity of this Sansjambes with an air of sufficient detachment, or, in default of this, had so clearly underlined the suggestion of indifference by my manner of manipulating my cigarette as to assure myself against the possible suspicion, easily avoidable, I had hoped, of a too immediately concerned curiosity, when "Ah! the fellow without legs!" replied Mallaby, with, as it, perhaps unwarrantably, seemed to me a levity so flippant that it might have appalled a controversialist less seasoned by practice than I'd the permissable satisfaction of crediting myself with the reputation of being.'

(*c*) ' Jocasta is known as a woman of learning and fashion, and as one of the most amiable persons of this court and country. She is at home two mornings of the week and all the wits and a few of the beauties of London flock to her assemblies. When she goes abroad to Tunbridge or the Bath, a retinue of adorers rides the journey with her; and besides the London beaux, she has a crowd of admirers at the Wells, the polite amongst the natives of Sussex and Somersetshire pressing round her tea-tables, and being anxious for a nod from her chair.' "

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

SELF-CONSCIOUSNESS

STYLE again. A friend, hitherto unknown, writes to me from Lancashire: "I am a member of a newly-formed literary club. Our ages range from sixteen to twenty; and I am writing on behalf of this small *coterie* to enquire whether you would kindly give us an article on 'Self-consciousness,' with particular reference to literature and literary style."

This is the sort of request which pleases me, and I will respond with all imaginable goodwill. The late Lord Granville, who retained through a long life of politics and gout the buoyancy of youth, was fond of saying: "I have been young; I have been uncommonly young. In fact, no fellow ever was younger than I once was." I might make that boast my own, and might apply it with a difference. I had written a good deal before I was thirteen, and at that ripe age I first appeared in print. From then till now I have been more or less steadily engaged in literary composition; and when I look back to the performances of my teens I can honestly say that they are uncommonly young, and that no fellow—not even my correspondent—ever was mentally younger than I then was.

These lucubrations aptly fit the topic of Self-consciousness, for it is peculiarly a disease of Youth. Like all diseases, it takes diverse forms. There is the

Self-consciousness of vanity, and the Self-consciousness of humility; and, somewhere between the two, there is the Self-consciousness which secretly thinks that it is pretty good, but shrinks like a Sensitive Plant from the breath of criticism. Of this last type a perfect specimen was Gifted Hopkins, the local poet of Oxbow Village, whom Oliver Wendell Holmes knew, and described in *The Guardian Angel.* For the Self-consciousness of vanity we need not seek illustrations from literature, for we meet it every day, and twice and three times a day. It is noteworthy that this form of the disease attacks with equal virulence the Athlete and the Scholar. For the former case we may cite the reply attributed to a famous cricketer when congratulated on his scores for All England — "Yes. I'm awfully glad for the governor's sake; when a man's in politics it does him a lot of good to have his son talked about." For the latter, that of the Senior Wrangler who, entering the theatre at the same moment as the King, bowed his acknowledgments right and left. The Self-consciousness of humility is purely pitiable. The youth who, entering a room, imagines that every one is mentally criticizing him, and noting that his coat does not fit or that his trousers are not accurately creased, undergoes torments which should draw tears from every Christian eye. For his sad case the only cure is to emerge from *coteries* and plunge into general society, for there he will soon learn that nobody cares a brass farthing about his looks, his dress, or his talk—a humiliating discovery, perhaps, but bracing and salutary in a high degree. The

bacillus common to all these forms of the disease is the tendency to think about oneself, instead of worthier objects—the people one meets or the thing one is doing.

So much for Self-consciousness in Life; now let us consider Self-consciousness in Literature. "She listens to herself while she speaks" was a French description of a Self-conscious woman. "He reads himself while he writes" might be the description of a Self-conscious author. It has been dreadfully suggested that all writers do this, with greater or less intensity. So it may be; for the secrets of the literary heart will never be laid bare. But, granting that they all commit the same fault, some can conceal it, and some proclaim it in every line they write. The Self-conscious authors are those of whom one feels perfectly certain that they weigh and measure every word, fit it with infinite care into what they believe to be its proper place, and stop at the end of each paragraph to ask themselves, "How does that read? Has it the proper cadence? Can't I discover some more outlandish word, some more impressive periphrasis?" Not thus, I ween, wrote Newman and Arnold and Church and Froude and Stanley. Not thus Sydney Smith and Walter Scott. Not thus the divine Burke. Not thus (to cite a living instance) Mr. George Trevelyan, when he was describing the Retreat from Rome and the death of Anita. All these are men who make one feel as one reads them that they simply wrote the thoughts of their heart, and wrote them in the words which came handiest, without a moment's pause to consider sound or

structure or effect; and that the peerless beauty to which they constantly attain was due to what, for want of a less theological word, we must call Inspiration.

Certainly some of the most famous masters of English prose produce an exactly opposite impression. Of Milton, and Gibbon, and Ruskin, and Carlyle, and Meredith one feels confident that they knew perfectly well how every word had got into its place; had tested its sound, and weighed its value. To turn, for a moment, from great writers to small, I suppose that few of my readers have ever read a line written by the late Archbishop Benson; nor do I recommend the attempt, except as a warning. The Archbishop's style was self-conscious and artificial beyond all example; and has been thus felicitously described by his son and biographer:

"As a young man, he wrote a most elaborate, uneasy English; and, in his later years, he wrote a style which must be called crabbed and bewildering. He tried to pack the sense of a sentence into an epithet, and had a curious love for strained and fanciful words. He sacrificed structure to preciosity, and lucidity to ornament. The result was that his most deliberate style was like that of Tacitus or Thucydides, full of points and overcharged with matter."

That passage exactly depicts what I mean by Self-consciousness in literature, and to me it is as distasteful as Self-consciousness in life.

Let us now turn (as in a Sermon) to the practical application. I understand that my friend's Club

(much better word than *coterie*) seeks to train its members in literary composition. I presume that, following the general usage of such societies, each member in turn writes a paper, and reads it to his fellow-members. Perhaps some hints, founded on experience, may not be unacceptable.

1. Choose a subject in which you are really interested. There is no more forlorn occupation than a hunt for topics. Take the subject which suggests itself to your mind, and do your best with it.

2. Cultivate Sincerity. Dean Stanley, who was constitutionally incapable of distinguishing one tune from another, once preached at a Choral Festival a beautiful sermon on the Office of Music in Religion. "Ah, Mr. Dean," said a gushing lady, "every word you said went home to me. How you must have felt it!" "Well," replied the Dean, "I do distinctly remember having once enjoyed a Drum." I tell this not for example, but for warning.

3. Having chosen a subject in which you are really interested, and which, as the gushing lady said, you "feel," think it out. Let your mind, as Matthew Arnold used to say, play round it. One does not want the study and the book of reference and the midnight oil for this. One can do it best in the open air—in a sunny garden, or a breezy down—even, if one does not over-value one's bodily life, on a horse or in a boat.

4. When the thinking is done—when you are sure that you know what you mean, and the various aspects in which it appeals to your mind—begin to write; and write straight ahead, just as if you were

talking. Don't coax the words, but trust them to come; and, as you speed along, all sorts of thick-coming fancies, of which you never dreamed beforehand, will cluster round your pen.

5. When you have got to the end of your ideas, stop. Don't cudgel your brains for more. Realise that you have now said all that you have really got to say, and that you will not improve your paper by trying to squeeze out fresh thoughts.

6. Let a day or two pass, and then read your composition with a critical eye. First, make certain that what you have written is grammar; then that it is sense; and then that it is the sense you mean. Put yourself in the reader's place, and ask yourself perpetually — What will he understand by this sentence, or that allusion? And now, remembering my youthful frailties, I make a concession and say— Don't drag in a word merely because it is strange or pretty; but, if you have written a homely or an evil-sounding word, and, in reading it, remember another which will convey your meaning as well, and also is pleasanter to the ear, don't hesitate to make the substitution.

7. Don't be ashamed or afraid of eloquence. A severe teacher used to say to his disciples: "Whenever you come to what you think a fine passage, strike it out." But I am more encouraging to the tender grass of nascent authorship, and, after all, we have Shakespeare's authority for holding that "good phrases are, and ever were, very commendable." If you find that your words have fallen into rolling sequences, or balanced antitheses, or trenchant

epigrams, don't rearrange them for fear of the reproach of trying to write fine.

8. Exuberance is not a fault, but a virtue, of youthful composition, and, if your rhetoric reaches the point of bombast, you may feel quite happy in the confidence that your fellow-clubmen will rebuke the fault. In truth, a literary club is a school of criticism no less than a school of authorship. Whoso is wise will lay to heart the admonitions of his hearers; and though he may maintain his independence by saying that the criticism is undiluted tosh, or simply ghastly drivel, he yet will ponder on it as he is walking home, and will recall it for his guidance when next he sits down to write. In literature, as in life, "Faithful are the wounds of a friend."

DESPOILED PHRASES

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I BORROW my title from that rich treasury of linguistic fun—*The New Guide of the Conversation in Portuguese and English.* The Guide sets forth as its reason for existing that " a choice of familiar dialogues, clean of gallicisms and despoiled phrases, it was missing yet to studious portuguese and brazilian Youth." Since the days of Browning, if not from an earlier period, " despoiled phrases " have been regarded as ornaments of poetic style, but to keep clear of them should be an object of ambition to all prose, and not least to that special form of prose which, through the daily and weekly press, seeks to educate and enlighten a docile public. The power which a widely read newspaper may wield in debasing the currency of common speech is frightful to contemplate. There is a certain newspaper, whether diurnal or hebdomadal I decline to state, to which I am attached by early and binding ties. Any indiscretions of speech or action which it may commit pain me as in youth I should have been pained by misconduct on the part of my grandmother. I feel that the deepest reverence is not inconsistent with a tender and loving remonstrance; and I am glad to find that what is dutifully tendered is graciously received. In reply to some recent criticisms, very gently but firmly urged, the editor of my favourite paper writes as follows:—

" These corrections suggest a very useful book that yet remains to be done. It might be called ' Press-Howlers: Being a Series of Letters to the Editor of the——.' "

The suggestion strikes me as excellent, but the proposed title is a little too like Elkanah Settle, whose " style," according to Dryden, was " boisterous, and his prose incorrigibly lewd." There is such a thing as being too idiomatic, and I prefer the half-archaic, half-foreign, flavour of " Despoiled Phrases."

Foremost among these phrases I am inclined to place " transpire," if only because it has been so cruelly misused with reference to the political crisis. Now " transpire " is an excellent word with a definite meaning, and if a London Correspondent were to tell you that the intentions of the Cabinet in the event of defeat had not transpired, he would be writing sound though Latinized English. But when Tom Garbage says (as he does in a passage now lying before me) that " the meeting was of a strictly private nature, and no details as to what transpired are at present known," he is using, in Anglo-Portuguese language, a despoiled phrase. That which transpires becomes known, and what is known must first have transpired.

To " claim " is another verb which Tom Garbage invariably despoils. A sound Shakespearean word it is, full of English resolution and pertinacity. We claim credit for our inventions, and claim payment from our debtors; we claim our rights, and claim our property, and claim our promised bride from her reluctant father. But Tom Garbage has invented,

or rather has imported from America, a new and terrible sort of claiming. According to this usage, Lord Curzon "claims to be" a heaven-sent statesman, or Mr. Chaplin "claims that he is" the Father of Protection. Sometimes, and this is even more alarming, the verb becomes impersonal, and we read: "It is claimed" for Mr. T. Garbage that he was the first English journalist to write *Program* for *Programme*.

Then, again—"Trend." When and where was this substantive discovered? Why is it so intensely loved by journalists? In what respect is it an improvement on our old-fashioned "Tendency"? "Happenings" are better called events. "Firstly" is an adverb repudiated by all authority, but irresistible to Tom Garbage when he is going on to "secondly." "An advocate" we all know—sometimes to our cost; but "To advocate" is a verb which makes purists stare and gasp. I once heard a Minister for Education say in the House of Commons that he had received "a voluminous communication" when he meant a long letter. But even his sesquipedalian Latinism was less offensive to the fastidious ear than "lengthy"—an adjective only fit to keep company with the horse-dealers' epithet "strengthy."

To "go without saying" and to "be much in evidence" are imported Galicisms, and "despoiled" in importation. "Ilk" is an importation from Scotland, and is invariably misused. When the name of the owner and the name of the estate are the same, as in "Brodie of Brodie," Scotsmen say "Brodie of that Ilk." But it is sheer nonsense to write about the

two Mr. Benns— "Wedgwood Benn must be clearly distinguished from Shirley of that Ilk." "Prior to" and "Affray" are fragments of pure journalese; and by journalese I mean written words which no one would use in talking. Who would say, "I read Family Prayers prior to breakfast," or "Tommy had an affray with the boys next door"?

But the crown of journalese is "St. Stephen's," meaning the House of Commons. Did any living creature ever direct a cabman to convey him to St. Stephen's, or say to a friend "Let's walk down to St. Stephen's together"? "The Gilded Chamber," meaning the House of Lords, is a scarcely less reprehensible phrase, and "The Upper House" should be restricted to Convocation.

Then again, there is a peculiar and quite new form of vulgarity—the antithesis of the sesquipedalian method,—which consists in choosing the shortest and most colloquial word, however little it may accord with its setting. "The Bishop of Birmingham's Lectures on the Apocalypse have proved a big success," or "The half-heartedness of the Government in redeeming its election pledges has aroused a lot of indignation," or "The demand for the creation of five hundred peers is regarded in the highest circles as a tall order, and one at least of Mr. Asquith's suggestions is a bit thick." I think it was an American trainer who said in his account of an international Football Match, marred, apparently, by some rather unsportsmanlike conduct, that "the boys were out to win"; and, applying this handy colloquialism to more important matters than football,

the modern journalist says that the Tories are "out to" destroy the Parliament Act.

It is all very well to borrow slang from America, but my gorge rises when we go to France for the technicalities of constitutional procedure; and offences of this kind have lately abounded. The immemorial custom of our English polity has made a seal the badge and instrument of office. Shakespeare recognised the sanctity of the Great Seal, and Blackstone is copious on the function of the Privy Seal, which "sets the Great Seal in motion." According to constitutional pedants, it was by the act of throwing the Great Seal into the Thames as he fled from London that James II. abdicated his sovereignty. When William IV. dismissed his Whig Ministers, Lord Holland, who was Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster, "stopped in great good-humour, and said to the Duke of Wellington, 'You can't get me out, I can tell you, without going down to Lancashire, for my Seal is there.'" When Lord Chelmsford was evicted from the Chancellorship by Lord Beaconsfield to make room for Lord Cairns, "he held the Great Seal back for a minute, and said, 'I have been worse used than a menial servant, for I have not even had a month's warning.'" Every Court and Corporation and Company in England aspires to the dignity of a Seal, and Burke boasted that we had taught the citizens of the United States "the mysterious virtues of wax and parchment." Nothing, in short, can be more historically impressive than a Seal of Office, and it is by the transfer of the Seals from one set of men to another that a change of Government is

effected. Yet the journalist of to-day turns for his technical terms to France, denuded by successive revolutions of all her constitutional symbolism, and says that Mr. Hobhouse "surrendered the Portfolio of the Duchy of Lancaster, which was transferred to Mr. Masterman." Portfolios may be all very well for foreign nations which possess no Seals, but in England they contain nothing more important than mezzotints or water-colour drawings.

Yet once more. The Session is ushered in by the usual banquets and official receptions, and the descriptive reporter is omnipresent—"Mr. Burns, in his Windsor Uniform, looked like a weather-beaten admiral." When a pressman writes that he has seen some one in the Windsor Uniform, the sub-editor, or some other competent official, should draw a blue pencil through the words. The Windsor Uniform is never seen except at Windsor, where certain highly favoured persons wear it at dinner. What the reporter sees is the ordinary uniform of blue and gold, worn, with more or less tinsel, by all Civil Servants, from Privy Councillors to Private Secretaries; and it has no more to do with Windsor than with Sandringham or Balmoral.

CULTURE

CULTURE

One of the social changes which most impresses me is the decay of intellectual cultivation. This may sound paradoxical in an age which habitually talks so much about Education and Culture; but I am persuaded that it is true. Dilettantism is universal, and a smattering of erudition, infinitely more offensive than honest and manly ignorance, has usurped the place which was formerly occupied by genuine and liberal learning. My own view of the subject is probably tinged by the fact that I was born a Whig and brought up in a Whiggish society; for the Whigs were rather specially the allies of learning, and made it a point of honour to know, though never to parade, the best that has been thought and written. Very likely they had no monopoly of culture, and the Tories were just as well-informed. But a man "belongs to his belongings," and one can only describe what one has seen; and here the contrast between Past and Present is palpable enough. I am not now thinking of professed scholars and students, such as Lord Stanhope and Sir Charles Bunbury, or of professed blue-stockings, such as Barbarina Lady Dacre and Georgiana Lady Chatterton; but of ordinary men and women of good family and good position, who

had received the usual education of their class and had profited by it.

Mr. Gladstone used to say that, in his school-days at Eton, it was possible to learn much or to learn nothing, but it was not possible to learn superficially. And one saw the same in after-life. What people professed to know they knew. The affectation of culture was despised; and ignorance, where it existed, was honestly confessed. For example, every one knew Italian, but no one pretended to know German. I remember men who had never been to a University but had passed straight from a Public School to a Cavalry Regiment or the House of Commons, and who yet could quote Horace as easily as the present generation quotes Kipling. These people inherited the traditions of Mrs. Montagu, who "vindicated the genius of Shakespeare against the calumnies of Voltaire." and they knew the greatest poet of all time with an absolute ease and familiarity. They did not trouble themselves about various readings and corrupt texts and difficult passages. They had nothing in common with that true father of all Shakespearean criticism, Mr. Curdle in *Nicholas Nickleby*, who had written a treatise on the question whether Juliet's nurse's husband was really "a merry man," or whether it was merely his widow's affectionate partiality that induced her so to report him. But they knew the whole mass of the plays with a wide and generous intimacy; their speech was saturated with the immortal diction, and Hamlet's speculations were their nearest approach to metaphysics.

Culture

Broadly speaking, all educated people knew the English poets down to the end of the eighteenth century. Byron and Moore were enjoyed with a sort of furtive and fearful pleasure; and Wordsworth was tolerated. Every one knew Scott's novels by heart, and had his or her favourite heroine and hero.

Then, again, all educated people knew history in a broad and comprehensive way. They did not concern themselves about ethnological theories, influences of race and climate and geography, streams of tendency, and the operation of unseen laws; but they knew all about the great people and the great events of time. They were conversant with all that was concrete and ascertainable; and they took sides as eagerly and as definitely in the strifes of Yorkist and Lancastrian, Protestant and Papist, Roundhead and Cavalier, as in the controversies over the Reform Bill or the Repeal of the Corn Laws.

Yet, again, all educated people knew the laws of architecture and of painting; and, though it must be confessed that in these respects their views were not very original, still they were founded on first-hand knowledge of famous models, and, though conventional, were never ignorant.

But it will be said that all this represents no very overwhelming mass of culture, and that, if these were all the accomplishments which the last generation had to boast of, their successors have no reason to dread comparison.

Well, I expressly said that I was not describing

learned or even exceptionally well-read people, but merely the general level of educated society; and that level is, I am persuaded, infinitely lower than it was in former generations. Of course there are instances to the contrary which perplex and disturb the public judgment, and give rise to the delusion that this is a learned age. Thus we have in society and politics such scholars as Lord Morley and Lord Milner and Mr. Asquith; but then there have always been some scholars in public life, so there is nothing remarkable in the persistence of the type; whereas, on the other hand, the system of smattering and top-dressing which pervades Universities and Public Schools produces an ever-increasing crop of gentlemen who, like Mr. Riley in *The Mill on the Floss*, have brought away with them from Oxford or Cambridge a general sense of having learnt Latin, though their comprehension of any particular Latin is not ready.

It is, I believe, generally admitted that we speak French less fluently and less idiomatically than our fathers. The "barbarous neglect" of Italian, which used to rouse Mr. Gladstone's indignation, is now complete; and an even superstitious respect for the German language is accompanied by a curious ignorance of German literature. I remember an excellent picture in *Punch* which depicted that ideal representative of skin-deep culture—the Rev. Robert Elsmere—on his knees before the sceptical squire, saying, "Pray, pray, don't mention the name of another German writer, or I shall have to resign my living."

Then, again, as regards women; of whom, quite as much as of men, I was thinking when I described the culture of bygone society. Here and there we see startling instances of erudition which throw a reflected and undeserved glory upon the undistinguished average. Thus we have seen a lady Senior Wrangler and a lady Senior Classic, and I myself have the honour of knowing a sweet girl-graduate with golden hair, who got two Firsts at Oxford.

The face of the earth is covered with Girls' High Schools, and Women's Colleges standing where they ought not. I am told, but do not know, that girl-undergraduates are permitted to witness physiological experiments in the torture-dens of science; and a complete emancipation in the matter of reading has introduced women to regions of thought and feeling which in old days were the peculiar domain of men. The results are not far to seek. One lady boldly takes the field with an assault on Christianity, and her apparatus of belated criticism and second-hand learning sets all society agape. Another fills a novel with morbid pathology, slays the villain by heart-disease, or makes the heroine interesting with phthisis; and people, forgetting Mr. Casaubon and Clifford Gray, exclaim, " How marvellous! This is, indeed, original research." A third, a fourth, and a fifth devote themselves to the task of readjusting the relation of the sexes, and fill their passionate volumes with seduction and lubricity. And here, again, just because our mothers did not traffic in these wares, the undiscerning public thinks that it has discovered a new vein of real though

unsavoury learning, and ladies say, "It is not exactly a pleasant book, but one cannot help admiring the power."

Now I submit that these abnormalities are no substitute for decent and reasonable culture. Pedantry is not learning; and a vast deal of specialism, "mugged-up," as boys say, at the British Museum and the London Library, may co-exist with a profound ignorance of all that is really worth knowing. It sounds very intellectual to theorize about the authorship of the Fourth Gospel, and to scoff at St. John's "senile iterations and contorted metaphysics" but, when a clergyman read St. Paul's eulogy on Charity instead of the address at the end of a wedding, one of his hearers said, "How very appropriate that was! Where did you get it from?" We can all patter about the traces of Bacon's influence in *The Merry Wives of Windsor*, and ransack our family histories for the original of *Mr. W. H.* But, when *Cymbeline* was put on the stage, society was startled to find that Cymbeline was not a woman. A year or two ago some excellent scenes from Jane Austen's novels were given in a Belgravian drawing-room, and a lady of the highest notoriety, enthusiastically praising the performance, inquired who was the author of the dialogue between Mr. and Mrs. John Dashwood, and whether he had written anything else.

I have known in these later years a judge who had never seen the view from Richmond Hill; a publicist who had never heard of Lord Althorp; and an authoress who did not know the name of

Izaak Walton. But probably the most typical illustration of modern culture was the reply of a lady much in bondage to convention, who had been enthusing over the Wagnerian Cycle, and, when a friend asked her to tell him quite honestly, as between old friends, if she really enjoyed it, replied, "Oh yes! I think one likes Wagner—*doesn't one?*"

THE HEALER

THE HEALER

THE 22nd of September 1910 was for Scotsmen a centenary; and not for Scotsmen only, but for all *homines bonæ voluntatis*, as the Vulgate translates the Angelic hymn—for all "men of good will," who find pleasure in calling to remembrance a character of pure virtue and an actively beneficent career.

I believe it is true that I have often written jocosely about Doctors and Doctoring; and, indeed, there are aspects of the medical profession which, in all ages, have afforded material for laughter. Never mind; the doctor "gets his own back," as the phrase is, when he condemns us to bed and slops for a week, or draws "Syme's knife" from its lair in that ornamental casket of lethal weapons. Thus armed, the doctor can stand a little chaff; and, to do him justice, he does not, as a rule, seem to resent it. But to-day I make no demands on his endurance, for I am writing with serious purpose about one who was a doctor, and something more. To call a doctor "a Professor of the Healing Art" is as obsolete as to call a barrister "a Gentleman of the Long Robe," or an M.P. "an Ornament of the British Senate." But the reproach of pomposity and long-windedness cannot, I think, be levelled against the simple phrase—"a Healer." The word is at least as old as the Authorized Version, and it has been made the title

of a striking poem in which Whittier addresses a young physician:

> " Beside the unveiled mysteries
> Of life and death go stand,
> With guarded lips and reverent eyes,
> And pure of heart and hand.
>
> So shalt thou be with power endued
> From Him who went about
> The Syrian hillsides, doing good
> And casting demons out.
>
> That Good Physician liveth yet
> Thy friend and guide to be;
> The Healer by Gennesaret
> Shall walk the rounds with thee."

Every doctor who approaches his vocation in the spirit of this high ideal must be, in his sphere and measure, a Healer, and the title is doubly appropriate to the man whom this chapter seeks to commemorate.

Doubly appropriate, I say, for Dr. John Brown, of Edinburgh, author of *Rab and his Friends* and *Marjorie Fleming*, was not only a skilful and successful physician, but also a writer whose quality was eminently sanative. He had been richly dowered with the gift of the Healer, and it flowed out from him not more conspicuously in his professional practice than in the charm of social intercourse and the cheerful magic of his pen. There must be many among my readers who know and love the books so inseparably associated with his name, and they, perhaps, may care to see a brief outline of his life.

John Brown was born in the town of Biggar, of a long line of Presbyterian ministers who had lived

and laboured outside the precincts of the Established Kirk. Both the Presbyterian and the Voluntary elements in his pedigree had their marked effect upon his life. He was educated at the High School of Edinburgh, and at the age of seventeen he chose Medicine as his profession. He was a pupil of the famous Syme (who gave us the knife mentioned in an earlier paragraph), and, when the days of pupilage were finished, his assistant in surgical practice. It was at this period of his life that he encountered the incidents which, twenty-eight years later, he wove into his world-famous story of *Rab and his Friends*. Of that story he said, in reply to reiterated enquiries, "It is in all essentials strictly matter of fact." Vague people always imagine that "Rab" is what they call "a story about dogs." Of course it is really a human document; but, in his handling of it the author reveals himself as a true dog-lover. He not only loved dogs, but knew them and understood them. "He has written of dogs with as great fidelity and intuition as Landseer has painted them." He believed that they have not only higher faculties than are commonly attributed to them, but something akin to the Moral Sense. Bacon said, and Burns repeated it, that "Man is the God of the dog," and thereto Brown added that "it would be well for man if his worship were as immediate, and instinctive, and absolute as the dog's."

But neither the love of dogs nor the love of letters was allowed, at the early period of which I am writing, to come between Brown and his professional work. He had chosen the office of a doctor, and he

gave himself to it with all his energies of body and mind—yet with a difference. Surgery, to which he had originally applied himself, could not long detain this delicate and sensitive genius. "He was not fascinated by the excitement of operative practice, and, as those were not the days of chloroform or any anæsthetic, his intensely sympathetic and sensitive nature seemed to recoil from the painful scenes of surgery." So in 1831 he left Edinburgh for a time, and became assistant to a doctor at Chatham, where the first outbreak of cholera gave him an opportunity —which he finely used—of distinguishing himself in a hand-to-hand fight with a new and mysterious enemy. One incident of that fight made a lasting impression on Charles Dickens, who said in later years, "There was a young Scottish doctor at Chatham during the cholera epidemic. He remained with a poor woman whom all had deserted, ministering to her till the end, and then, overcome with fatigue, fell asleep, and next morning was found asleep by her dead body."

By this time Brown had forsaken surgery and devoted himself wholly to medicine. From Chatham he returned to Edinburgh, took his M.D., and began the career of a practising physician, which, except when occasionally disabled by illness, he pursued for forty years. Yet "frequent contact with suffering humanity unhinged him much, and was indeed one of the greatest burdens of his life." His medical career was marked by no striking incidents. He kept himself studiously aloof from advertisement and notoriety. Though a staunch

Liberal in politics, he was in professional matters conservative, and mistrusted new lights. "He could not abide the theories and hypotheses, and reckless experiments of the period. . . . It was really the *Science of Healing* that he pleaded for, perfected by the practice of its Art." Many of his patients were ladies, who had been attracted to him by his tender and sympathetic writing. Like all good men, he loved the society of good women, but he loved it with discrimination. "A Talking Woman is an awful judgment, and mystery, and oppression." Himself the simplest and straightest of men, he could not tolerate the female patients who played tricks upon the doctor; "running from one 'charming' specialist to another; doing a little privately and dishonestly to themselves or the children with the globules; going to see some notorious great man without telling, or taking with them, the old family friend, merely, as they say, to 'satisfy their mind.'"

What Brown loved and encouraged was a perfect openness and intimacy of confidence between patient and physician, and, where that was established, he was the tenderest, most sympathetic, and most self-sacrificing of friends. His indifference to money made and kept him a poor man. Quite outside the limits of his profession, "his advice and counsel were sought by scores of young Edinburgh artists and literary men, and he had a felicitous gift of tendering advice with the least possible appearance of preaching." And to this was related another gift. "All natural and unaffected human

beings were at once at home with him, and even the most artificial prigs gradually thawed in his presence."

But it is time to turn from Brown the Doctor to Brown the Man of Letters. It was truly said by the *Eclectic Review* that " a man can scarcely hope for immortality by possessing the name of John Brown, but he may walk down to posterity with tolerable individuality by the epithet of *Subsecivæ* Brown." *Horæ Subsecivæ*, or, as he preferred to call them, " Bye-Hours," first appeared in 1858, but long before that date Brown had been at work, or rather at play, with his pen. He started as an art critic; he was one of the first reviewers to acclaim Ruskin's *Modern Painters*, and so began a series of studies on all manner of subjects—biographical, artistic, literary, social — which ran, chiefly in the *Scotsman*, for upwards of thirty years. Some of these papers, including *Rab and his Friends*, were collected in his first book of *Horæ Subsecivæ;* which was followed by a second in 1861, and a third in the year of his death—1882. Of the papers included in *Horæ*, by far the most popular was *Rab and His Friends*, first published as a pamphlet which made its author's name famous, not only in Great Britain, but in the colonies and the United States. It is indeed an exquisite idyll of Scottish peasant life, unsurpassed in tenderness and pathos; but, of course, there is no room for quotation here. Next to *Rab*, the paper which excited most interest was *Marjorie Fleming*, the story of a child precocious in goodness and cleverness, to whom the great Sir Walter turned

for refreshment and exhilaration when he found the task of writing *Waverley* hang heavy on his hands.

But even this very cursory sketch of John Brown would be glaringly incomplete without some reference to the quiet but fervent religion which coloured all his life and work. He held that " the greater and the better—the inner—part of man is, and should be, private—much of it more than private." Yet now and then he expressed his faith in words which could not be mistaken. In a letter written in 1864 he made a double protest against Renan's *Vie* and Newman's *Apologia*. " I am so glad I was grounded in historic Christianity in my youth, and am almost mechanically screened against these fellows, and their guns and shells, their torpedoes and mines." In a less challenging mood, he wrote, after hearing Jowett preach: " I liked his sermon much, but, with my old-fashioned beliefs, I miss the doctrine of sin and salvation." After reading Macaulay's Life he wrote: " He seems never to have been in love, and there is not a symptom of religion, personal conviction of sin and salvation in the book."

On the death of Thackeray, to whom both as man and as author he was devotedly attached, he wrote: " God grant we all get good by this, and indeed by everything! For that, after all, is *the* thing. Are we better or worse now than we were a while ago? Are we ripening, or withering, or rottening? "

And where could one find a more perfectly Evangelical sermon than is contained in the closing paragraph of his " Plain Words on Health, addressed to Working People "?

"Good-night to you all, big and little, young and old; and go home to your bedside. There is Some One there waiting for you, and His Son is here ready to take you to Him. . . . I need not say more. You know what I mean. You know Who is waiting, and you know Who it is that stands beside you, having the likeness of the Son of Man. Good-night! The night cometh, in which neither you nor I can work—may we work while it is day; whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might, for there is no work or device in the grave whither we are all of us hastening; and when the night is spent, may we all enter on a healthful, a happy, an everlasting To-morrow."

We could not fashion a more suitable Farewell to this "beloved Physician," whose whole gospel of life was summed up in this one sentence:

"God must have depths of light yet to reveal, to account for the shadows here."

DAVID GRAY—AND OTHERS

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I HAVE a correspondent who is by nature a poet, but occupied in a calling perhaps the least poetic in the world. To one so circumstanced it may be some consolation to reflect that his experience is not uncommon. Chatterton was an attorney's clerk. Keats was a surgeon's apprentice. Kirke White was a butcher's son and a scrivener's assistant. They make, perhaps, an oddly assorted trio, but they are alike in this—that fate "slit their thin-spun life" before they could emerge into that wider world where their genius would have brought them fame. John Bethune was a Scottish day-labourer, breaking stones upon the parish roads; Thomas Cooper was first a tailor's apprentice and then usher in a kind of Dotheboys Hall; and each did enough in poetry to prove that, under kindlier stars, he might have achieved something really great. The same is true of men now living, who probably would not thank me for mentioning their names. But one name there is which I must mention, if only because his poems have been sent to me by an unknown friend, whose kindness has never been properly acknowledged. A critic says: "Patrick MacGill is a poet, the like of whom we have not seen since Kipling burst upon us. He is the first poet to ring out ruthlessly the full epic of Labour." I admit the suggested resemblance

to Mr. Kipling, and I venture to think that where Mr. MacGill most closely resembles the author of "McAndrew's Hymn" he is least a poet. But see him in his native element—hear him sing the yearning song of Home and Love—and you cannot doubt that Ireland has given this wayward son of hers a full measure of her own pathetic genius:

'I'm going back to Glenties when the harvest-fields are brown,
And the Autumn sunset lingers on my little Irish town;
When the gossamer is shining where the moorland blossoms blow,
I'll take the road across the hills I tramped so long ago—
'Tis far I am beyond the seas, but yearning voices call,
'Will you not come back to Glenties and your wave-washed Donegal?'"

Glenties is a little village in one of the wildest parts of the north coast of Ireland, and Patrick MacGill was the eldest of a family of ten. By the time he was twelve he was working on a farm—"a man's work with a boy's pay"; and then, crossing to Scotland, became in turn labourer, hammerman, navvy, platelayer, and tramp. "During all these years he devoted part of his spare time to reading, and found relief from the drag of the twelve-hour shift in the companionship of books." He is now only 23, but has already found, unless I greatly err, the vocation for which he was created.

So far I have written of the "others," whom, in my heading, I have bracketed with David Gray; and I write of David Gray because the casual mention of his name in a recent paper has aroused some curiosity. I fear that the fame, which he never

lived to enjoy, is already dim; and I rejoice in this opportunity of commemorating a rare and beautiful spirit and a tragic fate.

David Gray was born at Merkland, near Kirkintilloch, in 1838. His home was a cottage, and his parents were peasants, frugal, hard-working, and independent; whose cherished hope was that their boy should enter the Ministry of the Scottish Church. For four sessions he attended lectures at the University of Glasgow, and supported himself there by working as a Pupil-Teacher. "But all the time his mind was brimming over with Poetry, which rose like a rising tide above his Latin, above his Greek, above his theology." He wrote incessantly, and in every metre. He longed even passionately for literary life, and cherished bright dreams of Fame. His genius had much in common with that of Wordsworth. He worshipped Nature with a lover-like assiduity; and his principal poem is devoted to the Luggie, a picturesque stream which, rising in Dumbartonshire and flowing westward, falls into the Kelvin at Kirkintilloch. The poem is in blank verse, but is redeemed from vapidity by the irregular movement of the metre, and by its purity of local colouring.

"Hushfully falls the soft, white, windless snow."

Surely a lovely and most expressive line, and one might quote a hundred such.

Gray was not quite 22 when he completed *The Luggie*, and then, moved by reports which had reached him in print from the literary world, wrote

to Richard Monckton Milnes, M.P., afterwards Lord Houghton, and father of the present Lord Crewe, asking him to read the poem. Monckton Milnes, himself no mean performer in prose and verse, had a genuine sympathy with the struggles of young ambition, and he promised to do what he was asked; and a few days later received the following letter:

"Sir,—You promised to read my poem. I travelled from London to give it to you, and to push my fortune. Looking two days before me, I see starvation. Shall I *send* or *bring* it? I know that you do not want to be troubled with people of my sort coming about you—that is what makes me ask. Whatever you do, do it *quickly*, in God's name.—Yours here below,

"David Gray."

Monckton Milnes was a philanthropist, but not of the type satirized by St. James. His sympathy always expressed itself in action. Within a couple of hours of the arrival of Gray's letter, he had found his way to a squalid lodging-house in Southwark from which it was dated, carrying with him a hamper of provisions. Having made arrangements for Gray's maintenance during his stay in London, he departed, greatly impressed by what he had seen of this fragile but fiery young Scot, with his Shelley-like brow and dreaming eyes. He took the manscript of *The Luggie* with him, promising careful perusal and a considered judgment. A few mornings later David

Gray appeared, in a state of hysterical excitement. It was February, and he had spent the previous night in Hyde Park; unconstrained by any necessity to take the risk, but animated by some morbid fancy. Milnes warmed and fed and clothed him, but the mischief had been done; and Gray was already stricken by the disease of which he died. Indeed, it is probable that consumption had laid hold of him before he left Scotland, and that his excitability, his restlessness, and his capricious moods were due to the fever which was sapping his life. Milnes " visited him like a physician, and tended him like a nurse "; and, as soon as he was fit to travel, sent him back to Merkland. But the poor lad could not rest. He had made acquaintance in London with another poet and critic, Sydney Dobell, and through his kindness was enabled to enter a Hydropathic Establishment near Richmond. Thence he addressed to Milnes a touching letter of half-apology for having taken this step without consulting his first friend:—

" Four months ago I had a letter written for you which I was afraid to post, and ultimately burned, and since then I have been *going* to write to you at least fifty times. I saw your name often in the newspapers, read your speech at Pontefract and your article in *Fraser*, and what, thought I, have I, a poor, weak, diseased, far-away youth, to do with you? "

The upshot of this renewed correspondence was that Milnes despatched Gray to Torquay, where some of the elder man's family lived, and to their tender care he confided the consumptive poet. But

Gray had not been two days in this new refuge, when he was seized by an irresistible longing for home. Aided by the unwise liberality of the doctor who attended him, he rushed back to Merkland in the early spring of 1861. "This season," he wrote, "is very severe, and more dangerous symptoms appear; but I have myself to blame." Acting under Milnes' counsel, he now began to revise the manuscript of *The Luggie*. "Your recognition," he wrote, "gives me confidence. Your letter out-balances drugs innumerable. With morphia I shall manage to transcribe what remains of the MS., and the whole shall not make much over one hundred pages of a book." With persevering kindness, Milnes induced a publisher to accept the poem; and Gray was for the moment cheered; but the morbid restlessness, the passionate longing for change, seized on him again. He implored Milnes to send him to the Mediterranean. "I would not like to die at home, among weeping friends and all the horrible paraphernalia of dissolution." Milnes's inexhaustible kindness would probably have helped to satisfy this last longing, but the time for such aid had run out. On the 2nd of December Gray received a specimen page of the printed *Luggie*, and received it as good news—"the fragmentary realization of his ambitious dreams"; and cheered by the hope that his name might not be totally forgotten, he said that he could now enter "without tears" into his rest. He had already composed his epitaph, beginning thus:

> "Below lies one whose name was traced in sand;
> He died, not knowing what it was to live."

The end came next day; and over his grave in the churchyard of Kirkintilloch his friends placed a simple monument, which bears this inscription from Milnes' pen:

This Monument of
Affection, Admiration, and Regret
Is Erected to
DAVID GRAY,
The Poet of Merkland,
By friends from far and near,
Desirous that his grave should be remembered
Amid the scenes of his rare genius
and early death,
And by the Luggie, now numbered with the streams
Illustrious in Scottish Song.
Born 29th January, 1838.
Died 3rd December, 1861.

BOOKS

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I MUST admit that my subject sounds rather wide, but I am, of set purpose, generalizing, because I am trying to satisfy a widespread desire for guidance about books and reading. My correspondence testifies to the existence of that desire, and I should rejoice if I were able in any degree to satisfy it. One cannot help contrasting this eagerness to learn, even in the scanty leisure afforded by a laborious profession, with the strenuous idleness which is traditional in Public Schools and Universities; and the contrast is not untinged by "compunctious visitings" of conscience.

In the first place let me congratulate all those who have thus asked my guidance on the grand and elementary fact that they love books. The love of books cannot be acquired. It must be born in one, like the love of music, or the love of horses, or the love of the sea (or, to take a humbler instance, a taste for olives). If Nature endowed us with it we ought to be devoutly thankful; for in truth it is one of the chief assets of happiness. Life may be vexatious and disappointing—nay, painful and even tragical,—but as long as we have got books to read, and the love of reading them, it can never be dull. It therefore pleases me to know that so many of my friends in Lancashire value aright the priceless heritage which

has been handed down to us in the books of all ages; that they dutifully revere those true "Relics of the Saints without imposture," and are not indifferent to "that vast assemblage of uncrowned kings who stand silently beckoning to us," and bidding us sit down at the rich feast of their manifold wisdom.

But this vague regard for books is one thing, and reading is another. A mere general interest in literature and writers and libraries, such as in an age of superficial culture we all profess, is no substitute for that close, sympathetic, penetrating study of a book which brings us into personal relation with the man that wrote it; which fills us with his mind and spirit, till they become part, and the best part, of ourselves; which gives us, in short, fellowship with the Immortals.

If, as I believe, the love of books is a birthgift, it is also true that the gift develops itself in quite different ways. In some cases it begins with a particular instance, and expands as it grows. Some one great book first seizes on the boy's virgin intelligence —perhaps a religious book, perhaps a romance, perhaps a poem; he loves it, devours it, assimilates it. In turn, the book reacts upon the boy; it takes possession of him, and masters him; and remains, from schooldays to old age, the core of his heart, and the colouring principle of his intellectual life. Of course, as years go on and interests widen, the grown man travels to "fresh woods and pastures new"; includes one domain of literature after another in his mental range; learns to love books of all kinds and ages and countries, because they are books—the work of human genius, the utterance of human voices.

Yet still he keeps " the young lamb's heart amid the full-grown flocks," and reserves his fondest homage for the great man who first woke him to intellectual energy.

With another class of readers the process is reversed. Perhaps the boy is brought up amid literary surroundings in a cultivated home, or educated by some teacher more capable than his fellows of making literature attractive to the young. The boy grows up with a general interest in books at large, touched here and there with more special affection for some clinging passage of sonorous prose, or some line of poetry more than usually " interpretative "; but as yet there is no individualizing interest, no personal attachment. There is a general sense that literature is grand and beautiful, and the knowledge that it has played a great part in human thought and action; but there is no direct and conscious appropriation of any one author as a personal friend. Then somehow, somewhere, the hour and the man arrive. Some yearning from within, or some pressure from without, brings the young student face to face with a mind which fits his own; he finds his vague aspirations satisfied, his ideal conceptions realised, and the traditional office of literature, as he received it from others, actually fulfilled in his own case. The vague love of literature, which was natural to him, becomes concentrated and defined in love for an author who has cheered or calmed or guided; care for books in the abstract becomes care for a book in the concrete; and at last the man knows by personal experience that the Sacredness of Literature is no cunningly devised

fable or worn-out platitude, but a tangible and beneficent reality.

Thus, sooner or later, by one process or another, every one who really cares for reading becomes the disciple of some great author. The authors are really the "Epoch-making" men—not epoch-making merely in the chronological order of history, but epoch-making in the lives and intellects of those whom they subjugate. "The decisive events of the world take place in the intellect." It is this realizing contact with the mind of a writer, this human interest in literary work, that gives its special value to classical study, and makes it, as an instrument of education, so much more helpful and expansive than physical science. Nobody can read Plato or Aristotle, even superficially, and be, mentally, just the same man that he was before. "The modern European civilization," wrote Mr. Gladstone in 1861, "from the Middle Ages downwards, is the compound of two great factors—the Christian religion for the spirit of man, and the Greek (and, in a secondary sense, the Roman) discipline for his mind and intellect. St. Paul is the Apostle of the Gentiles, and, in his own person, a symbol of this great wedding. The place, for example, of Aristotle and Plato in Christian education is not arbitrary, nor in principle mutable."

Among the great men of antiquity, and indeed of all time, Homer remains to the present hour the inexhaustible source of "that light and heat which, dispersed through ten thousand channels, have filled the world with bright images and illustrious thoughts." Those who are curious in such matters

have noted that Homer has been pre-eminently the Statesmen's poet, as Horace has been beloved by dwellers in Courts and Camps, by wits, diplomatists, and men of fashion. Tennyson was guilty of no exaggeration when he saluted Virgil as

> "Wielder of the stateliest measure
> Ever moulded by the lips of man."

Of the Moderns, Shakespeare has probably educated more minds than any other writer; but, if we put him on one side with Homer, Plato, and Dante, as belonging to the rank of the unapproachably great, it would be difficult to name the modern writer who has most powerfully influenced his contemporaries. "Goethe made, and unmade, Germany," but I disregard that mysterious sentence, for just now I am thinking of the writers who have left their mark on England. Countless schoolboys have owed their first interest in books to Sir Walter Scott. Carlyle formed the thought, and deformed the style, of three generations. Cardinal Newman's mind, that "miracle of intellectual delicacy," guided the religious investigations of a great and goodly company. Tennyson threw the glamour of genius over the most familiar aspects of English life and landscape. Ruskin preached a gospel of beauty, which was to many a new revelation.

Agreement in thought and mere opinion between the author and the reader is by no means essential to the love of the book. Milton, I suppose, has awed and charmed by his austere and lofty genius thousands who shared neither his Puritanism on the one

side nor his latitudinarianism on the other. Pope has been read with delight by generations of sound Protestants. Cowper's pensive yet humorous muse has attracted numbers whom his Calvinism would have utterly repelled. Keble's love of nature has won him a place in very unecclesiastical households. We can enjoy Thackeray's style though we repudiate his view of human nature; and thrill to Burns's pathos while we loathe his ethics. The divine melodies of Shelley have entranced thousands of homes which his social theories would have rendered desolate. Our love of Byron—never so keen as when the Eastern Question is uppermost—is not extinguished by our detestation of his character; nor are *The Pleasures of Memory* less pleasurable because their author was accounted the greatest sensualist of his age.

What the heart demands of the writer who would claim its homage is that mysterious faculty which speaks straight to our innermost being, and sets all the chords of our nature vibrating; which tells us something about ourselves that we did not know before, or something that we knew and yet believed hidden from all else; which puts into vocal form and expression the vague impalpable impressions that have swayed us, yet eluded our grasp—in a word, the faculty which makes us feel that we do not stand isolated and friendless in the great world of intellect and spirit.

Here for a moment I must turn from Books to reading; from rather hackneyed generalization to two topics of practical counsel.

Books

I. If my friend cannot read Greek or Latin, and sees no reasonable prospect of learning them, I exhort him not to neglect Plato and Virgil, but to read them in their English guise. The form of a translation can never be exactly the form of the original, but, as regards substance, a translation such as *The Republic* in the Golden Treasury Series leaves very little to be desired. I fortify my advice on this head by the unimpeachable authority of the Master of Trinity, lately addressing the Classical Association.

II. If my friend has no time or inclination for serious and exhaustive study, and yet loves books and wishes to know more about them, he must not be ashamed of desultory reading. Let him read as nature prompts him—the authors whom he enjoys and the subjects in which he is interested; and, if more mechanical students sneer at his imperfect knowledge, let him retort with the encouraging instance on which Mr. Balfour, addressing the undergraduates of St. Andrews, once enlarged—"Pope, with the most imperfect knowledge of Greek, translated Homer; with the most imperfect knowledge of the Elizabethan drama, edited Shakespeare; and, with the most imperfect knowledge of philosophy, wrote the *Essay on Man*.

CRITICISM

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THE year 1865 opened a new era in at least one department of English literature. In that year Matthew Arnold published his *Essays in Criticism*, and the publication of that book was, as Mr. Herbert Paul has said, "a serious intellectual event"—"an event in the world of letters." It set a new fashion; it introduced English people to a new method in the critical art. Down to that time, English criticism had been a desperately heavy-handed affair. The critic started with a violent prepossession against a book, or a school of thought, or, not seldom, against an individual writer; and he belaboured the object of his dislike with all the force which he could bring to bear. He allowed no extenuating circumstances; he admitted no palliation of the offence. His business was to punish, and he did it with a will. No one ever accused Macaulay of spitefulness or ill-nature; yet his letters reveal the enjoyment with which he regarded the prospect of trouncing an offender, and looked back upon the deed when done. A typical instance of this trait is supplied by the case of Robert Montgomery. That amiable and virtuous man committed the crime—not an uncommon nor a heinous one—of publishing bad poetry. Fortunately for his pocket, but unfortunately for his fame, the public liked his poetry and bought it in large quantities.

This was enough for Macaulay, who, in his capacity as "Minister of Justice in the Republic of Letters," proceeded to inflict exemplary punishment. "It was," said Mr. Gladstone, "without a shadow of ill-feeling towards the culprit that the judge put on the black cap of doom. But it is much to be regretted that, when Montgomery subsequently appealed for mercy, Macaulay refused to withdraw his article, which had more than served its purpose, from the published collection of his Essays; so that this bad poet, but respectable and respected man, is not allowed the sad privilege of oblivion, and the public are still invited to look on and see the immortal terrier worrying the mortal mouse."

When a man so genuinely amiable as Macaulay could indulge in this kind of literary vindictiveness, it was only natural that men of baser mind and more rancorous spirit should deal even more savagely with their victims. Personal insults were freely intermixed with literary censures, and private character was assailed as readily as public performance. "Peter Plymley" derided the poverty of Canning's relations, and the ugliness of Percival's face. One critic wrote: "He is a bad, a very bad, man—a scandal to literature and to politics." Another said of a rival: "He is generally considered to be bribed by Government, and has talked about Social Order till he has talked himself into £600 or £700 a year." To "criticize" a book was, in the common acceptation of the term, to condemn it; and literary condemnation was no half-hearted business. If a book was not, in the reviewer's opinion, white, it was black; and, if it was

black, it was very black indeed. There was no room for grey—for shading, or half-tones. "This book is ill compiled, ill arranged, ill written, and ill printed." "Compared with the labour of reading through these volumes, all other labour—the labour of thieves on the treadmill, of children in factories, of negroes in sugar plantations, is an agreeable recreation." "We doubt whether any name in literary history be so generally odious as that of the man whose character and writings we now propose to consider." "If Mr. Bowles had begun his literary career at a period when superior discrimination and profound thought—not vulgar violence and the eternal repetition of rabble-rousing words—were necessary to literary reputation, he would never have emerged from that obscurity to which he will soon return."

Even when the virulence of John Wilson Croker, and Sydney Smith, and Theodore Hook, and "Christopher North" had fallen out of fashion, and the *Saturday Review*, "written by gentlemen for gentlemen," had come in, the conception of criticism as exclusively censure still survived. For the newer style one instance may suffice:—"To do this" (*i.e.*, to take a certain line in public affairs) "seems to us eminently worthy of a great nation, and to talk of it as unworthy of a great nation seems to us eminently worthy of a great fool." This citation has a special relevance to the subject under discussion, for it was chosen by Matthew Arnold to illustrate the want of "Urbanity" in English criticism. His own method was extremely different. It was, as he himself said, "easy, sinuous, unpolemical." When he set out to

criticize, there was no doubt about what he meant; but he eschewed rudeness, grossness, and violence; and made his criticism tenfold more effective by making it good-tempered and urbane. And, apart from questions of manner and method, he taught his countrymen a new conception of what Criticism meant. He showed, alike by precept and by example, that Criticism was not necessarily Censure. "It is," he said, "the business of the critical power in all branches of knowledge—theology, philosophy, history, art, science—to see the object as in itself it really is." Of course the effort to do this must often involve censure or disparagement; but not less it may bring to light merits and beauties in the thing criticized. The first requirement for "seeing things as they really are" is to be, as Arnold said, "disinterested"—to disentangle oneself from prejudices and predilections; to "let one's mind play freely" round the subject, and to set aside whatever might hinder a calm judgment on the merits. For the critic who, by instinct or habit, is a partisan this is obviously a difficult achievement; but, though it is difficult, it is salutary and rewarding. The earlier critics of whom I spoke about never attempted it. Indeed they would have thought the "disinterested" attitude a contemptible weakness. Even Sydney Smith boasted that he "had never been smitten by the palsy of candour," and such critics as Croker and Wilson would have deemed it disloyalty to their party if they had admitted merit in a play or a poem which issued from the opposite camp. "This fellow is one of the wrong lot—hit him as hard as you can" was in substance the

watchword of our earlier critics. But Arnold taught us, and in the *Essays in Criticism* exemplified, a totally different spirit. He instilled the duty of discrimination and of independent judgment. The critic must stand outside all parties and cliques. We were not to say "This is a first-rate piece of work" merely because the author was one with whom in the main we agreed; and, even when we were writing about our favourite poet, or painter, or politician, we were to admit the existence of spots on the sun if an unprejudiced survey made them visible. What Arnold preached, he practised, as one might show by innumerable citations. For example, there was no writer in the world from whose conclusions he dissented more widely than from those of Cardinal Newman. "He has adopted, for the doubts and difficulties which beset men's minds to-day, a solution which, to speak frankly, is impossible"; and yet no one ever paid finer homage to all that was best in Newman—the mind which was "a miracle of intellectual delicacy"—"the words and thoughts which were a religious music, subtle, sweet, mournful."

On the other hand, there was Wordsworth, of whom Arnold was all but an idolater; and yet he frankly admitted that a great deal of what his master wrote was deplorably dull, and that his eulogists praised him mistakenly. "We must be on our guard against the Wordsworthians, if we want to secure for Wordsworth his due rank as a poet. The Wordsworthians are apt to praise him for the wrong things, and to lay far too much stress upon what they call his philosophy.

His poetry is the reality, his philosophy . . . is the illusion. I have spoken lightly of Wordsworthians; and, if we are to get Wordsworth recognized by the public and by the world, we must recommend him not in the spirit of a clique, but in the spirit of disinterested lovers of poetry." In these two instances —and they might be multiplied indefinitely—one sees exemplified what Arnold meant by criticism: not rancorous condemnation, not even untempered eulogy, but the dispassionate endeavour to see things as they really are. It is perhaps to him, more than to any other writer, that we owe the substitution of the modern idea of "Appreciation" in literary comment, for that old notion of criticism, which meant of necessity the hostile verdict and the penal sentence.

So far I have written of Criticism as it is applied to literature. But I should quite misrepresent Arnold's teaching if I made no reference to the criticism of life and conduct. That form of criticism is indeed one of the most attractive, and, when practised intelligently and conscientiously by those whose business it is to instruct the community, it may render inestimable service. Here I would take for my illustration the criticism which, through a long and laborious life, R. H. Hutton applied week by week through his articles in the *Spectator*. But, at the same time, I must point out that the criticism of life has its perils, inasmuch as it strongly disposes those who ply it to hold aloof from the practical business of the world, and to spend their energies in finding fault with others, instead of giving their own contribution to the work of making things better. "The critic," said Arnold,

"should keep clear of the region of immediate practice"; and that is a precept which appeals with fatal force to indolence and self-regarding ease. It is so much easier to criticize than to act; to find fault with others than to take our own share of the toil. And yet the easier part may well be the wrong one. Not all of us are called to sit in judgment on our fellows; but we all are called to bear a hand in righting the wrong and spreading the light.

The habit of criticism, early indulged, tends to become a second nature: paralyses effort, and is fatal to good citizenship. A poet, or at least a rhymester, has embodied this conviction in the twin personalities of "Hem" and "Haw"—two bright creations whom I think we all can recognize. "Hem" is the high-sniffing satirist who sniggers and belittles. "Haw" is the pompous Philistine who prides himself on his robust common-sense, and his freedom from enthusiasms and illusions.

"'Hem' was the father of bigots and bores,
As the sands of the sea were they;
And 'Haw' was the father of all the tribe,
Who criticize to-day.

And still, in the honest working world
With posture and hint and smirk,
Those sons of the devil are standing by,
While Man does all the work.

They baulk endeavour and baffle reform
In the sacred name of Law,
And over the quavering voice of 'Hem'
Is the droning voice of 'Haw.'"

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